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MY NEW CURATE

A RELIGIOUS DRAMA

BY JOHN J. DOUGLASS, A. M.
Author of
"THE EXILE OF ERIN."

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MY NEW CURATE

By CANON SHEEHAN

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Dramatized By

JOHN J. DOUGLASS, A. M., LL. B.

Time: 1876. Place. Kilronan, Ireland.

Act I.—FAITH.	Scene—Father Dan's Study.
Act II.—HOPE.	Scene—Outside Chapel and Rectory.
Act III.—CHARITY.	Scene—Along the Beach at Kilronan.
Act IV.—GRACE.	Scene—Father Dan's Study.

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This is a refined, religious drama, interspersed with true Irish wit.

Address all letters to Brother Benjamin, St. Xavier's College, Louisville, Ky.

CAST

Father Dan, Parish Priest at Kilronan.....
Father Letheby, the New Curate.....
Jem Deady, Tiler and Roofer, President of the "Holy Terrors"
Mrs. D'Arcy, Father Dan's Housekeeper and Sacristan.....
Captain Campion, of Her Majesty's Service.....
Beatta Campion, Captain Campion's Daughter.....
Captain Ormsby, Inspector of the Coast Guards, an Infidel.....
Fagan, an Informer.....
Hale, alias Hogan, Fagan's English Friend.....
Alice Moylan, a Blind Girl.....
Mary, Alice Moylan's Sister.....
Nance, the Outcast.....
Mike Murphy.....
Mr. Murphy and Mrs. Murphy, Evicted Tenants.....
Jamesey and Mary, Children of Mrs. D'Arcy.....
Diggins, a Bailiff.....
Bobbs, his assistant.....
Chairman of the Merchants.....
Mr. Blake a Merchant.....
Factory Forewoman.....
Peasants, Soldiers, Sailors, Fishermen, Factory Girls, Altar Boys, Choir Singers, Merchants, etc.

MY NEW CURATE

ACT I.

SCENE: Father Dan's Study. Very Plain, with religious furnishings. Window, Doors R. & C., Table, Chairs, Armchair, Fireplace, Bookcase, Lamp lighted, Large picture of Madonna on wall.

Father Dan discovered in armchair, musing. Mary and Jamesey—two small children—discovered seated on floor; Mary reading large picture book, and Jamesey building house with toy blocks—Time, Night.

Fr. Dan (to himself) Well, after all it's all my own fault, this sudden change of curates, a deserved rebuke from his Lordship, the Archbishop. I was too free with my tongue. In a thoughtless moment, half in earnest, half in jest, I said, "What do I care for the Archbishop? I am a parish priest, and independent of anyone. So what can he do?" The impertinence was carried to his Lordship, and he answered, "What can I do? I can send him a new curate that will break his heart in six weeks." Hence the removal of my life-long friend and companion, Fr. Tom, and the arrival here one week ago of this learned Fr. Letheby, D.D. Humph! A Doctor of Divinity no less! Well, his Lordship has certainly trained a big gun against the heart of plain Fr. Hanrahan. But will he hit the mark? Well, time will tell, time will tell. (resumes reading.)

Jamesey (surveying his block-house) Look, Mary, I've done it.

Mary—Isn't it grand? (touches blocks and they fall down.)

Jamesey (Crying) Now you've gone and spoiled it.

Mary—I didn't mean to, Jamesey. Honest! I didn't.

Jamesey—Yes you did too. I'm going to tell ma.

Fr. Dan—Here! Here! stop your quarreling, you little pagans.

Mrs. D. (off stage in loud angry tones) "Dirt," says he, "Dirt."

Fr. Dan—Ho! Ho! here comes your mother now and in a fine rage. Now you'll catch it.

(Enter Mrs. D. M., in a splutter and throws bunch of keys at the feet of Fr. Dan.)

Mrs. D.—There! and may no child of mine pray over my grave if I iver tuch thim agin.

Fr. Dan (quietly) Well, Mrs. D'Arcy, what's gone wrong?

Mrs. D.—Everything begorry. Wisha, where in the world did you get him? or where did he come from a tall, atall?

Fr. Dan—You mean my new curate, I suppose,

Mrs. D.—Yerra! who else could I mane, the son of a jook? Humph! he's more the son of a blacksmith, I say. Didn't Mrs. Moriarity tell me she sold socks to his owld father over in Kilkeen? An' the loikes of him comes her complainin' of dacent people?

Fr. Dan—But, my good woman, what has the priest done to cause this explosion?

Mrs. D.—Done, is it? Yerra, I'm jist chokin' to tell ye of it. Well, he walks in the sachristy this evenin' wid all the airs of the Lord Liftinint, if ye please, an' begins a fussin' an' fumin' about the holy place. "Dirt," says he.

Fr. Dan—Dirt?

Mrs. D.—Yiss, yer rivirince, dirt, D-double E-R-T, dirt. Where? says I. "Look at that," says he. An' father, what do you think?

Fr. Dan—I'm sure I can't imagine.

Mrs. D.—He actually points an' calls the swapin's of the altar an' clane ashes, "dirt." "Yerra," glory be to St. Patrick," says I to meself, "What nixt?" "Look at that altar cloth," says he. "It's a disgrace to the church." Now Father Dan, I lave it to yourself, whin was that altar-cloth washed last?

Fr. Dan—Oh, about a week ago, I should judge.

Mrs. D.—Six weeks to the minute, an' it's as clane to-day as whin it came from the tub. But, says your grand cojutor, with his gran' accent, "Do you call that clane wid thim drippins of the candles on it?" "Yerra, what harm is that?" says I. "Wax that fell from the blessed candles?" Wid that he thritins to report me to yerself, but begorrah, I ups an' towld him I'd have me own story first, an' now I tells ye Father Dan, I won't

stand it, if I have to beg me bread from door to door.

Fr. Dan—Well, Mrs. D'Arcy,—

Mrs. D.—I say I won't stand being towld I'm dirty. (sobbing and busy with handkerchief). Shure, a poor woman's character it all she has.

Fr. Dan—But, my good woman—

Mrs. D.—Shure, didn't the Bishop tell me he could see his face in thim candle sticks an' that it was the natest vestry in the diocese. But this new cojutor, wid his English ways an' his pianney an' his gran' firniture. Begor! no one can stand him. We must clear out. (busy with handkerchief) An' me after me eighteen years of scrubbin' an' washin' an' ironin', wid thim two blissed orphans on me hands, must go to forin countries to earn me bread.

Fr. Dan (rising and starting to pick up the keys) Well, perhaps Mrs. D'Arcy—

Mrs. D. (quickly) No, Father Dan, if you wint down on yer two binded knees an' said, Mrs. D'Arcy, I deplore ye to take up thim keys an' go back to your dooties as me housekeeper an' sachristan, I wouldn't. No, get some whipster that will suit his rivirince. Mary D'Arcy ain't clane enough.—going to door—

Fr. Dan (picking up the keys and crossing) My! my! but this is a pretty kettle of fish.

Mrs. D. (to children) Come, me poor darlin's we'll find a night's lodgin' over at Mrs. Moriarity's, (children cross to her). The trifle of money ye owe me, yer rivirence, ye can sind over in the mornin' before I start for Ameriky. Goodnight; (starts to exit, returns) An' if ye don't mind givin' me a character—

Fr. Dan—Wait a bit: Mary, who gave you that beautiful picture book today?

Mary (crossing to his L.) Father Letheby, isn't he good Daddy Dan?

Fr. Dan—Yes. And, Jamesey (Jamesey crosses to his R.) Who gave you that box of toys?

Jamesey—Father Letheby, and he showed me how to make a house out of them too.

Fr. Dan—Yes. And didn't he say to me tonight that you

and Mary were the two sweetest darling little angels in all Kilronan, and that your mother ought to be proud of two such precious jewels as yourselves?

Mrs. D. (from door) Did the new cojutor say thim words, Father Dan?

Fr. Dan—He did indeed, and paid you other compliments that would make you blush, especially about your cooking. Now, what have you to say?

Mrs. D. (slowly) Well, under thim conditions, I'll consint to give him another trial (comes down stage) But, remimber, tell his rivirince, whin he comes back from the sick call over to Bantry, tell him, Mary D'Arcy ain't "DIRTY." I'll trouble you for thim keys, if ye plase (takes keys from Fr. Dan) Come, me darlins, 'tis time ye said your prayers and were in bed (goes to door)

Jamesey and Mary—Goodnight, Daddy Dan.

Fr. Dan—Good-night, my dears, and may angels watch over your dreams (children exit)

(Jem Deady heard off stage singing "The wearing of the Green.") (He is seen passing by the window in the midst of song.) (Jem knocks on door.)

Mrs. D.—There's Jem Deady, your rivirince. That's his knock.

Fr. Dan—And his infernal singing. It's the pledge for life he's after again, I know. But tell the vagabond I won't see him tonight. (sits at table reading.) (Mrs. D. exits). This fellow is the plague of my life, a perennial source of mischief. It's at a rope's end he'll finish his career I'm thinking. (re-enter Mrs. D'Arcy, quickly.)

Mrs. D.—He says he must see you father, it's a matter of life or death, he says.

Fr. Dan (rising) Life or death? then admit him at once.

Mrs. D. (calling off stage) Come in Jem.

(Enter Jem Deady, twirling his hat awkwardly and with apparent bashfulness.)

Jem—Good evenin', Father Dan.

Fr. Dan—Good evening, Jem. What's this matter of life or death? No more trouble with the police I hope.

Jem—None, since lasht night, yer rivirince, whin we dropped

one of the divils in the duckpond by way of no harm.

Fr. Dan (sitting in disgust) Oh, you incorrigible rascal?

Jem (hesitatingly) But what brought me here.....is..... well.....that is to say.....I came to tell ye, father, that the roof of the chapel is lakin' again.

Fr. Dan—What, again? Why, it was only last week you repaired it and guaranteed the job for a year.

Jem—Thrue for yer rivirince! but you see the big storm of Tuesday lasht upsit all me calculations, an' so now for the small price—

Fr. Dan—Not another farthing. I've given you the last penny you'll ever see for repairing that roof. You vagabond, I'm beginning to think that every time you repair one leak you always leave two in its place on purpose.

Jem (with injured innocence) Shure, father, ye don't think I'd be robbin' the Holy Church that way, do ye?

Fr. Dan—I wouldn't put is past you, you rogue. (Mrs. D'Arcy laughs and exits.)

Jem—Well, father, I'm hearty sorry for the bad opinion ye have of a poor honest boy like meself; but I gives ye fair warnin' that accordin' to the almanac there's another big storm due for nixt Sunday mornin' and' if the roof of the chapel lakes down on the people at Holy Mass an' some of thim gits "New Mahoney" out of it, 'twill be yourself that'll be to blame an' not honest Jem Deady, tiler an' roofer—

Fr. Dan—And schemer. Now home with you to your family! and mind steer clear of the ale-house.

Jem—Can't I have one wee drop, father?

Fr. Dan—Not a single drop. Straight home with you.

Jem (withdrawing up the stage) Well, all right father, as soon as the meetin's over.

Fr. Dan—Meeting? What meeting?

Jem (mysteriously) Shure, our secret pathriotic society, the "Holy Terrors," meet on the green tonight for drill. (noise of shouting in the distance off stage.) Begorrah, they're at it already. I must hurry or I'll miss the fun. Good night, father Dan, good night. (runs off. More shouting off stage.)

Fr. Dan (rising and looking out window) Meeting and drill indeed. These poor fellows will amuse themselves playing at

soldiers, and probably catch pneumonia out of it, and there 'twill end. Yes, for the day of Ireland's deliverance is yet afar off. (more shouts off stage) (enter Mrs. D'Arcy.)

Mrs. D. (announcing) Miss Beatta Campion to see your rivirince.

Fr. Dan—Admit her, Mrs. D'Arcy (exit Mrs. D.) I know well enough what Beatta wants. Poor little angel! Her young heart is almost broken over her father's falling away from the faith. (enter Beatta; has sad appearance.)

Beatta—Your, Reverence, I have come to ask—

Fr. Dan—Yes, I know my child. (they shake hands; he points her to chair) "Be seated." (sits himself.) Well I saw your father as I promised, and tried to persuade him to come to his Easter duty. But I had my labor for my pains.

Beatta—Oh, his indifference in matters of religion is so hard to understand. But oh! how ardently I have prayed for his return to the practice of his faith. How many masses, how many communions have I offered up to obtain that grace!

Fr. Dan—Do not despair, my good child; keep up your prayers and good works, and God, in His own time and way, will surely answer you. (pause) Oh, by the way Beatta, who is that young man I see you with so much of late?

Beatta—A friend of my father—Captain Ormsby.

Fr. Dan—I hope his morals are as excellent as his looks.

Beatta (with enthusiasm) Oh, he's a perfect gentleman, a graduate of Trinity, an Inspector of the Coast Guards, and father says, he has a pension of two thousand a year, a good salary and great expectations.

Fr. Dan—Your father told you all that, did he? Ho! Ho! I think I hear wedding bells.

Beatta (Bashfully) Well, father has indeed spoken to me already of Mr. Ormsby—hesitates—

Fr. Dan—Humph! I thought so. And how does my little girl regard the proposition? (she hesitates) Come, don't be afraid to tell Father Dan.

Beatta—Well, I suppose I really do like Captain Ormsby, but....but....

Fr. Dan—Come, my girl, out with it.

Beatta—There—there is a very serious objection....at least

on my part....to our marriage.

Fr. Dan—Objection to a rich, educated gentleman and an inspector of the Coast Guards? Bless me, what can it be?

Beatta (slowly and sadly) He is a professed infidel.

Fr. Dan (rising) An infidel? an infidel? My! My! but that is an objection, an insurmountable objection. No, Beatta, 'tis bad enough to have a father who is indifferent to God, but a husband who denies him, oh, never, never! Besides, child, the rules of the Church. No, no, this match shall not be. I forbid the banns, I forbid the banns. (walks about) But, my child, has this young man no faith at all?

Beatta—Well, you see father, he has travelled all over the world and seems to have taken his faith from his climate. Why he told me once that when in Cairo he had actually kissed the tooth of Buddha.

Fr. Dan—Indeed! and what good did that operation do him? (walks about in thought) Humph! this is a hard case. My dearest parishioner has set her heart on this globe-trotter.

Beatta—Oh, no father—

Fr. Dan—Yes you have, my child. I can read you like a book. But there's a great big wall in the way, and it won't do to repeat the tragedy of Pyramus and Thisbe. Now the question is how to make this young fellow a Christian, (takes a book from the case.) Have you tried him with good books, Beatta?

Beatta—Yes, father, with the best in print, but they seem to make no impression on him.

Fr. Dan (replacing book) My! My! what's to be done. (pauses) Well, I see only one hope, our Lord and his Blessed Mother. So Beatta, get the mites of children to pray for this man's conversion and your father's. I can't understand how God can refuse the little ones anything.

Beatta (rising to go) I will, father. Thank you, good night.

Fr. Dan—Just a minute. Another idea strikes me. My new curate, Father Letheby, is a great scholar, a Doctor of Divinity, just the person to put the fear of God into these unbelievers.

Beatta—Oh, father, if you would only send him over to our

house tomorrow, I'm sure it would do a world of good.

Fr. Dan—I will, my child. Good night and God bless you, and don't forget the children's prayers.

Beatta—No, father. Good night.—exit; (shouts off stage are heard.)

Fr. Dan (musing) An infidel? My! My! "Only the fool hath said in his heart there is no God."

Fagan (outside in rough, loud voice) I say I will come in. Out of my way ye brazen baggage. (enter Fagan driving Mrs. D. ahead of him) (his coat in his hand, is torn, his vest split up the back, and he presents the appearance of one knocked down in the dirt; he is excited and angry throughout the scene.)

Fr. Dan (interfering) Here, here, Mr. Fagan, remember where you are. What's the matter? (sits at table.)

Fagan (brushing himself as Mrs. D. goes up stage) Matter is it? Assult and battery's the matter. Your new curate's the matter. Look at the state of me (turns himself around.)

Fr. Dan—Well, I must say I have seen you looking more presentable at this rectory.

Fagan—Rectory? Presentible? Faith an' it's to an hospital I ought to be presinted. But I'll make him pay dear for this, so I will. There's a law in the land that'll reach even priests for assultin' decent parishioners.

Fr. Dan—Parishioners indeed? And how long have you been a practical Catholic, Mr. Fagan? When were you to your confession last?

Fagan (gruffly) That's me own business (puts on coat.)

Fr. Dan—And the devil's too. But go on with your story.

Fagan—That I will, and no thanks to ye. Well, I was just addresin' a meetin' of the pathriots outside. You might have heard the thunderin' applause that greeted me constitootional remarks?

Fr. Dan—I heard the crowd of you shouting "rebellion."

Fagan—Rebellion is it? an' why not? (in bombastic, oratorical style) Too long have the brutal hirelin's of England—

Fr. Dan (interrupting and striking table with hand) Cease this babble, hypocrite, and come to the point.

Fagan—That I will, and no thanks to ye. Well, jist as I was in the midst of me pathriotic discourse, along comes your

new curate, grabs me by the nape of the neck, strikes me betwixt the two eyes wid his iron fist, slams me on the turf, an' ginerally abuses me, as if I were the scum of the earth. An' so I've come to you, so I have, to have him removed from this parish, an' at once (strikes the table with his fist) (comic, bus. by Mrs. D. in corner with broom.)

Fr. Dan—Easy there, man. Fr. Letheby is an earnest, holy priest of God; and, I doubt not, had the best reasons for his action.

Fagan—Rasons, is it? Thin ye mane to defind this outrage, do ye? Well thin, I'll see what the Bishop will do. I have influence in Dublin, mind ye, an' I'll have this interloper silenced, so I will, an' if that don't keep his dirty fists off of dacent people—with threatening gesture—why thin..... (towards end of this speech enter Fr. Letheby, with Jem Deady, and a group of male peasants behind him.)

Fr. Letheby (quietly) Well, sir, what then?

Fagan (retreating as if greatly afraid of Fr. Letheby) I'll see what the law'll do.

Letheby—See that it doesn't take vengenance on yourself first, scoundrel. (to Fr. Dan) Excuse me father, while I explain to these men. (to peasants) Boys, I broke up your meeting just now because, well God knows, I pity you. You are bent on a desperate and foolish course the outcome of which no man can forsee.

Fagan (sneeringly) That's what ye priests always say. The priests are always again the people.

Letheby—That's a lie and you know it. Remember the Soggarth Aroon. For seven hundred years the priests and the people have fought side by side in the battle for Irish freedom.

Jem—Thrue for ye, father, 'tis what our fathers and our fathers' fathers have always towld us.

Peasants—Hurroo!

Letheby—But men, think of the consequences of your present folly, possible imprisonment in the dark dungeons of Portland and Dartmoor; exile to America or Australia, separation from your Holy Church, whose laws you are infringing, separation from your families to whom you are a constant source

of terror and tribulation. And all this men too, all this at the dictation of a traitor in the pay of the government, to betray you.

Jem—Excuse me father, but you are wrong there. There's not one in our crowd but what's true blue.

Letheby—So you think, sir; so you all think perhaps. But I tell you there hides in your midst a traitor of the blackest hue! (peasants look at one another in dismay) (Fagan squirms, and looks anxious, down, right. Letheby produces paper from his cloak) Look! This paper, obtained, no matter how, is a copy of the original on file in the archives of the police, some of which mind you, were secret witnesses to your meeting tonight (bus. by peasants). It contains the names of every young man that has been sworn into your secret society, (peasants regarding paper over shoulder) and the name that heads all the rest is that of one James Deady, tiler and roofer.

Jem (amazed) Glory be to St. Patrick! who has betrayed us?

Letheby—Who? The vile informer who addressed you tonight, Mr. Fagan (points to him crouching and crosses with paper to Fr. Dan.)

Jem (to Fagan) You black imp of hell; (Jem and peasants rush and seize him, dragging him screaming towards the door.)

Fagan—Help! Murder! Police!

Fr. Dan (crossing to C.) No violence boys, I command you.

Jem—No more than a ducking in the pond, yer rivirince. Shure 'twill be a charity to give him a wash anyhow.

Peasants—Hurroo! (rush him again.)

Fr. Dan—Stop! Leave the monster to the pangs of his own conscience.

Jem—No, father, lave him to the "Holy Terrors." 'Twill do him more good. Away with him boys. (peasants shout, and with Jem Deady rush Fagan, (yelling) "help, murder, police," (out of door pass off stage.) (Peasants' shouting gradually dies away. Letheby removes cloak and gives it to Mrs. D. to hang upon rack.)

Fr. Dan (looking after crowd at window) Father, I'm afraid you have stirred up a hornet's nest.

Letheby—Oh! if I have done wrong may God forgive me!

but the thought that here in this quiet little village was a secret society hatching rebellion quite upset me. It's a bad business, sir.

Fr. Dan (coming down from window to sit at table.) Yes, father, bad for soul and body. But to cure the evil we priests must act judiciously. A good surgeon, you know, never hurries over an operation. So, my dear young man, take an old priest's advice and go slow, very slow. But you must be tired and hungry after your long ride on the sick call. Mrs. D'Arcy, bring in some lunch for his Reverence.

Letheby—Pray, father, don't bother about me. I'm all right.

Fr. Dan—Oh, but I will. A cup of hot tea, Mrs. D'Arcy.

Mrs. D. (going and aside.) "Dirt," says he, "Dirt", (Mrs. D. exits and returns presently to arrange lunch on the table and exits ad lib.)

Fr. Dan—Tell me, father, who was sick?

Letheby (sitting at left of table.) An old mountain ranger by the name of Conroy. He is very low and I annointed him. And my, how he did pray! Really, sir, the faith and fervor of these people is quite extraordinary. I always felt in Manchester, on my mission there, that I was living at the bottom of a huge black chimney in smoke and stench and noise, material and spiritual. Ah, but here you have the holy people and the peace and quiet of God. How happy your ministry among them must have been. (sipping his tea.)

Fr. Dan—Very happy, thank God!

Letheby—Do you know father, since I've come here, I've been thinking that ye are not making all that we might out of the magnificent possibilities that lie before us. Things are pretty backward here in Ireland; and yet we have an intelligent people, splendid natural advantages—

Fr. Dan—Yes; and absentee landlords and an infernally bad government.

Letheby—Well, for example, I'm told that shoals of fish whiten the sea here in the summer time, and yet the men have no appliances with which to catch them, and sell them at a vast profit. Now, why not build a pier out there, or perhaps even persuade our merchants to subscribe to build a modern

fishing boat? (rises and goes to window.) Then, again father, look at that old mill lying idle down there by the creek. Why not furnish it up and have our young girls working there?—(comes down again.) Pardon me if I seem to be finding fault with the ministry of the priests here, but I am sure you will understand me.

Fr. Dan—Oh, perfectly. Do you know, your words carry me back thirty years to when I first came to Kilronan as a new curate. Ideas like yours burned in my brain. I too would build a factory and a fishing schooner; yes, I would make Kilronan a new favorite seaside resort of the western coast. I did try it all. God knows! with all the faith and fervor of my soul. But I might as well have tried to move a mountain with a pitchfork. Nothing on earth can cure the inertia of Ireland. However, don't let my experience discourage you or dispel your bright dreams (musingly.) Still I ought not to conceal from you the the worst.

Letheby (a bit surprised.) The worst? Father, let me know all I pray you.

Fr. Dan (sententiously.) In the improbable events of the success of your ambitious schemes for their good, the people won't even thank you.

Letheby—What! they won't be glad to be lifted out of all this misery and degradation to a newer and sweeter life?

Fr. Dan—Precisely. They are happy enough as they are. Take an old priest's advice and leave them so. "They sow not, neither do they spin, nor yet do they envy Solomon in all his glory." How can you expect to add to such happiness? By building a fishing schooner and sending them out on the high seas exposed to all the dangers of the deep? and for what? A little more money, a litle more drink. And, when all's said and done, the verdict will be, "Why didn't he leave us alone?" "We were better off as we were."

Letheby (thoughtfully.) What you say, father, sounds sensible enough. But there's some vile fallacy at the bottom of it. (with determination.) Yes, and I'm going to prove it. Despite the lethargy of the peasants; in spite of absentee landlords; in the face of governmental bureaucracy, I am resolved to build that fishing schooner for the men and restore that fac-

tory for the women. Tell me father, tell me I have your permission to begin.

Fr. Dan (rising.) Oh, certainly, if you insist. But I warn you, sir, that in twelve months time all you'll have to show for your pains will be a head for gray hairs, that's all.

Letheby—Nevertheless, Fr. Dan, come what may, I'll try. And now your blessing on the work. (kneels at Fr. Dan's feet, as the latter blesses him.)

ACT II.

Scene:—Outside the Chapel and Rectory. Drop—full stage—representing country side with road crossing stage. Chapel, with steps and door R. Cottage, with door L. Large stone cross up stage D., near road, Rustic bench near cottage door.

Beatta (discovered standing on chapel steps and decorating chapel with flowers, ferns, etc., Mrs. D. near by, watching her.)

Beatta (finishing decorations.) Now, Mrs. D'Arcy, how does that look?

Mrs. D. (admiringly.) Beautiful, mum, beautiful.

Beatta—Now I think I'll decorate the Blessed Virgin's altar inside.

Mrs. D.—Do, Miss Batty, if you plaze. You know, Father Letheby is mighty fussy about that altar, mum. He gave me strict orders this mornin' to have it lookin' uncommon nate for the closin' of the "Forty Hours" this evenin'.

Beatta—Very well, Mrs. D'Arcy, I'll attend to it (about to enter chapel.)

(Jamesey and Mary run in from L.)

Jamesey and Mary—Oh, Ma, look here come the soldiers.

Mrs. D. (looking off R.) 'Tis your father, Miss Batty, wid his men.

(Campion and squad of soldiers enter R., cross stage, and exit L., followed by the children mimicking their step.)

Mrs. D.—You'll excuse me for sayin' so, Miss Batty, but I notice that your father nivver raises his hat whin he passes the Chapel now.

Beatta (sadly.) No, Mrs. D'Arcy; I'm afraid my father is becoming rather (sees Ormsby, who has entered R., and is standing L. C., looking down road, she crosses to him.) Oh, Captain Ormsby, tell me what brings the soldiers from the barracks this afternoon?

Ormsby—There's to be an eviction down the road at five o'clock.

Beatta—Another? and who are the unfortunates to be driven from home this time?

Ormsby—An old couple—the name is Murphy, I believe.

Mrs. D. (picking up stray flowers and ferns from the chapel steps.) The Murphys, is it? Musha thin, they've lived in that old cottage yonder these sixty years, an' now they're to be turned out of house an' home. Yerra, bad cess to the law an' the landlords, I say.

Beatta—Oh, why should it be my father who always has to do this miserable work?

Ormsby—It's only his duty as an officer of the crown, my dear.

Beatta—Yes, I know; but the peasants don't take kindly to these evictions. They say my father is too hard-hearted, and they have often actually threatened to take his life. And, oh, if anything serious were to happen to him now, when his soul is at enmity with God, oh, I cannot bear to think of it! turns aside—

Ormsby (approaching to console her.) Then don't, my dear, surrounded as he is by the power of the British government, and majesty, your father is perfectly safe. However, much the peasants may threaten, they will not dare to resort to violence.

Fagan (who has entered unseen.) R.—If they do we'll have the law on thim. (exit L. as angry shouts are heard off stage.)

Beatta (disturbed by shouts) What is that?

Ormsby (up stage L.) Only the peasants hooting the soldiers (louder shouting) perhaps after all, I'd better go and help preserve the peace.

Beatta—If you only would, captain (exit Ormsby L., amid more shouting, etc.)

Beatta (Going towards chapel.) Oh, God watch over and pro-

tect my poor father (exit into chapel.)

Mrs. D.—That's a fine gintlemin, that captain Ormsby. Too bad he's an infidel;

(Jamesey and Mary run in L.—Deady heard singing R.)

James and Mary—Oh, ma, here comes Jem Deady. (calling to Jem) Halloa, Jem, (runs off R.)

Jem (stopping his song in the distance) Hello, me darling.

Mrs. D.—Strange the vagabond's not at the eviction. But I'll not tell him of it or there'll be murder shure. (sits on chapel steps and busies herself with basket and flowers.)

(enter Jem, carrying little Mary on his shoulder and leading Jamesey by the hand, R.)

Jem—Arrah, Jamesey me darlint, and its the strapper ye're growin' to be. An' you me darlint (placing her on the ground) you'll soon be as beautiful as your charmin' mother over there. The crame of the afternoon to ye, Mrs. D'Arcy, an' it's swate as a honey-suckle ye're looking this day.

Mrs. D.—Arrah, go along about your bisiness, ye blatherskite.

Jem—Bisiness is it? Musha an' thin it's about me bisiness I've come down here. Is Fr. Letheby at home, I don't know?

Mrs. D.—No, he is not. And if he was, its small bisiness he'd be having wid the loikes of Mr. James Deady, tiler and roofer (sarcastically.)

Jem (imitating her tone) Is that so now, Mrs. Mary D'Arcy, housekeeper and sacristan? (approaches her) but whist! till I tell ye a secret (lowering voice) I've come around the Cojutor and got a job.

Mrs. D.—For Hivin's sake. Not the old job.

Jem—The owld job to be shure, repairing the roof of the chapel again (pointing up.) Fr. Dan wouldn't stand for it at all, at all, at first, but me friend the Cojutor, used his inflooence, an' so I'm here to see his Rivirince to borrow me first week's pay, a week in advance, to buy me a ladder to go to work.

Mrs. D.—To buy drink, ye mane, ye schamin' tippler. Musha thin, I wonder the priest hasn't more since thin to be dalin wid the loikes of ye.

Jem—Since, is it? Begorrah, he had since enough to pick out your Jamesey for an altar by, hadn't he? (to Jamesey)

Come here me bucko, an' you too, Mary you roguish queen of the fairies, come thither an' sit by your dadda (taking children to him affectionately on the rustic bench L.—Pause) Do ye know Mrs. D'Arcy, I've been thinkin' a grate deal of late about these two blissed orphans of yours.

Mrs. D.—An phwat do ye be thinking? I ax ye?

Jem (solemnly) I do be thinkin' 'tis a shame entoirely to have thim livin' on this way all their lives without a father.

Mrs. D. (Moved) Thrue for ye, Jem, but shure they'll never find another father like poor Mike D'Arcy, may the hivins be his bed this day. Hoo—hoo (comic bus. of crying and moaning with a large bandanna to wipe her eyes.)

Jem—Boo—hoo! (imitating her crying bus., with a different colored handkerchief—of the tail of his coat.)

Mrs. D. (sobbing) He had his ways, so he had, but he was good to the children, so he was, Boo hoo—Bus.—

Jem (Boo-hoo!—bus.,) and with children again—Right ye are, Mrs. D'Arcy. He wor a good man, wor Mike, an' a good purvider. He'll be *cannonized* (play on this word some day,) I'm thinkin'.

Mrs. D. (loudly) (Boo-hoo—bus.) Oh, why did he die, why did he die?

Jem—Cheer up, poor sowl, he'll nivver die again.

Jem and Mrs. D. (together) Boo-hoo! (Jem now wipes eyes of the children, who are also boo-hooing) (Pause.)

Jem—But me good women, let's dry our eyes. The poor man's dead an' gone to his reward, the more's the pity, an' all the tears in Christendom wont bring him back again; now, do be after listenin' to a bit of common since advice from an owld friend of the family. Ye know ye're a widdy now.

Mrs. D. (loudly bursting out again) Boo-hoo (bus.)

Jem—Boo-hoo! (bus., and with children again) Now, 'tis hard for ye poor sowl, so it is, wid these two blissid orphans on your hands, to be toilin' day an' night, washin' an' scrubbin' an' ironin' for the bite that goes into their little mouths. Now, if ye'd be after doin' your duty be yourself an' the orphans here, ye'd be keepin' your eyes out for a substitute for their father.

Mrs. D.—A substitute for me departed spouse, is it? Musha,

in the name of charity, where would I be after lookin' for such, I ax ye?

Jem (Coddling the children) (assuming a very fatherly air.) Well, Mrs D'Arcy, if ye wor so disposed, ye wouldn't have to look farther thin this same bench here.

Mrs. D. (rising and contemptuously.) What! a lazy good-for-nithing tipler an' common disturber like yourself to fill the shoes of poor Mike D'Arcy, I'd marry a fiddler first.

Jem (rising and approaching her.) Aisy there, me honey-suckle. Didn't poor Mike, on his dyin' bed, say to ye wid his last breath—that if ivver ye made up your mind to take a second husband, that I'd be his first choice for his successor?

Mrs. D.—Well?

Jem—Well, under thim conditions, what's to prevint you namin' the happy day?

Mrs. D.—Begor, thin I will.

Jem (rushing to embrace her.) Darlint of me heart!

Mrs. D. (Warding him off.) Wait a bit. I'll marry you Jem Deady, (slowly) on the first day—

Jem (jubilantly) of nixt month, yiss.

Mrs. D.—No, on the first day I see "swallows wearin' overcoats" (laughs heartily, crosses stage, and goes with children into cottage.)

Jem (after standing for awhile musing and slowly lighting his pipe.) "Whin swallows wears overcoats," is it? Begorrah thin they'll have to do it, for I'm resolved to be the father of thim orphans. (noise of rioting off stage:) (Jem runs up stage C.) Hallo, what's that? (shouts again.) Blast me eyes, if it aint a row at Murphy's. (more shouts.) Wow! wow! there goes a red-coat down wid a stone on top of him. Glory be to ructions, I mustn't miss that picnic (runs off excited L. shouting) "Hurroo."

Letheby (entering L., amid the shouting.) Another eviction? Merciful heaven, will the miseries of this distracted people never end? (goes to chapel steps, and stands reading his breviary.)

(Ormsby enters L., stands looking down the road.)

Ormsby—I left matters quiet, but the trouble seems to have broken out afresh. Campion is very indiscreet—but blood-

shed? No, the peasants will not dare.

Letheby (reading aloud to himself.) We can see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known. And there remain faith, hope, and charity, these three. But the greatest of these is Charity. (closes book and is about to enter chapel.)

Ormsby—Excuse me Mr. Letheby, but I have come to return the book you lent me. (handing him the book.)

Letheby—Ah, yes, St. Thomas on "Faith." The work has enlightened you some, I hope, Mr. Ormsby.

Ormsby—No; I cannot truthfully say it has resolved any of my doubts.

Letheby—No? well, if St. Thomas fails to convince, you are a sceptic indeed, Captain.

Ormsby—From your point of view, yes. Still I am greatly attracted by your Church. In its extraordinary history since the time of the apostles, it presents such a shining example of unity and all-embracing Catholicity. Then again, it seems to be founded on love, love of a supernatural kind, and almost beyond understanding. Really, sir, my heart is with you. If my head would only follow.

Letheby—My dear young friend, even that won't do. The head might follow and you might still be as far from us as a Hindoo.

Ormsby—I don't understand. Surely all that is wanting now is a conviction of the truth of your teaching.

Letheby—Captain, there's your grave mistake. Conviction is not faith. Faith is not a matter to be acquired by mere learning. It is a gift like the talent of a great painter or musician—a sixth sense—the pure gratuity of the All Wise and All-Good.

Ormsby—Pardon me, but I do not quite follow as to that sixth sense. It seems to me this is a question not of sense but of the soul.

Letheby—Let me explain. Have you ever visited a blind asylum?

Ormsby—Oh, yes, though principally abroad. By the way you don't mind my smoking?

Letheby—Not at all (Ormsby sits on bench and smokes.) Well, you may have noticed then that there are various degrees of the dread disease of blindness. But the most pathetic case to by mind is that of the young boy or girl who comes towards you, looking steadily at you, with large luminous eyes the iris perfectly clear, the pupil normally distended and every outward indication of perfect health in the organ. But, in an instant, the truth flashes upon you, that the poor child is blind. Now where's the disease?

Ormsby—Why, the optic nerve is destroyed.

Letheby—Precisely. And now, if you were to pour in through the dark canal of the pupil the strongest sunlight, do you suppose it would make any difference?

Ormsby—None, so far as the sight is concerned. Rather it might paralyse the brain.

Letheby—Exactly. And so, my dear young friend, if you were to pour till the crack of doom every kind of human light upon the dark retina of the soul without the optic nerve of faith, you would still be blind to your grave.

Ormsby (rising thoughtfully.) Well, it is something to know that the fault is not altogether my own. But really, sir, my conversion demands a miracle.

Letheby—Quite so, and that is why I am storming the citadels of heaven for you with that resistless artillery, the prayers of the little children, and if you sincerely wish to capture this grace of God by one tremendous coup, search out the most striken and afflicted of my flock, and get that one to pray for you. And mark my words! very soon the light of faith will burst upon you and you will wonder that you were ever blind.

Ormsby—A thousand thanks four your kind advice, and to prove my sincerity, I'll follow it at once.

Letheby (taking his hand.) Do, my friend, and as God liveth and reigneth, the Holy Ghost will surely enter your soul.

(loud uproar heard off stage L.) (Letheby and ormsby go up stage to see the trouble. Presently, peasants, male and female, and soldiers, enter in a confused group—the peasants headed by Jem Deady, struggling with the soldiers.)

Letheby—In the name of God, men, cease this fighting.
(as fighting and uproar gradually subside, an old man and an

old woman emerge from the crowd to the side of Fr. Letheby at R. C.)

(Old man and old woman.) Save us, your riverence, save us. (clinging to him for protection.)

(enter Beatta from chapel and Fr. D. an Mrs. D.)

(Campion breaks through the crowd and comes down L. C.)

Letheby—Captain Campion, what is the meaning of this?

Campion (Defiantly.) It means that I am enforcing the laws of England and will punish any man that dares to interfere.

Letheby—What law gives you the right to drag the faces of these poor people through the dust?

Campion—The law of eviction, sir?

Letheby—You have already evicted them from their cottage, have you not?

Campion—Well, what of it?

Letheby—This. They now stand upon the ground of the Roman Catholic Church under my protection—and you touch them at your peril.

Peasants—Hurroo! Bully for you, Father Letheby.

Letheby—Silence men. Mrs. D'Arcy, take these unfortunates inside and care for them.

(Old man and woman—crossing to L. to Mrs. D'Arcy.) Long life to your Riverence. Long life to your Riverence. (exeunt into cottage with Mrs. D.)

(Beatta is now sitting on Chapel steps with Ormsby trying to console her.)

Fagan (coming out of the crowd.) This is treason and I call for the law.

Jem (seizing him.) Then take it, ye scut (kicks him off L.)

Campion (to soldiers.) Men, attention! Back to your barracks. March!

(soldiers form and exeunt R., while peasants exeunt on both sides, hissing the soldiers. Jem exits L. Making funny faces at Campion, who is plainly nervous and nettled.)

Campion (coming down C., and to Letheby.) Sir, your conduct just now is equivalent to an insult and I demand an apology.

Letheby—An apology? For what? Because you persecute the poor?

Campion (rushing, enraged.) Be careful, sir. I am not used to such language.

Letheby (with quiet dignity.) Perhaps not. But you'll have to listen to it just the same.

Campion (rushing at him with upraised hand.) By God, sir, I've a mind to pitch you over the cliff.

Beatta (rising in alarm.) Father! Father!

Ormsby (seizing Campion and aside to him.) Captain, are you mad?

Letheby (to Beatta.) Fear not, my child (she sits again) (he returns to Campion.) Now, Sir, as to that pitching, let me tell you there are two sides to the question. So hard-heart, listen, for I am not afraid of you and I will speak. I said you were a persecutor of the poor. I repeat it. How many homes have you made desolate by your cruel and inhuman enforcement of the law? How many innocent sons have you forced into exile or imprisonment? Yet, steeped in iniquity, as you are, you don't care.

Campion (now moved a bit.) Sir, I—

Letheby (quickly.) No; and conscienceless as you are, you don't care for the God that made you, nor for that pecious jewel he has entrusted to your keeping—pointing to Beatta, weeping on Chapel steps.

Campion (touched by the reference to Beatta.) Sir, you wrong me, I love my child. I am not an irreligious man.

Letheby—You are, because you never kneel to God, or obey the commandments of his Holy Church. But let me tell you sir, by your irreligion, by your wicked enforcement of the law, you are slowly breaking that child's heart, and for yourself paving a quick and certain road to hell and eternal damnation. (crosses to Fr. Dan at L.)

Campion (overcome by scene.) By jove, I never thought a priest could talk to an officer and a gentleman so boldly. But to be very frank with you, sir, I rather like it. We soldiers hate nothing so much as a coward. We like priests to show us they believe in hell by trying to keep us back-sliders out of it. Mr. Letheby, I think that you and I will make better friends than enemies. I apologize. Your hand (extends his hand.)

Letheby—On one condition.

Campion—Name it.

Letheby—That you promise to make your peace with God and be at the altar rail next Sunday.

Campion (hesitating.) Well, I'll think it over—withdraws his proffered hand and crosses to Beatta—My child, you are going to be happy now, aren't you?

Beatta (embracing him.) Yes, father, very happy (they turn and go up stage, and meet Ormsby, R. C.)

Campion (with enthusiasm pointing to Letheby.) By jove Ormsby, what a soldier that fellow would make!

(exeunt Campion, Beatta and Ormsby R.)

(Stage Note?) (At the opening of the eviction scene, stage lights are turned to represent sunset, and gradually change during above scene, till it is now supposed to be quite dark.)

Fr. Dan—Well, father, you've taught your old pastor a wholesome lesson. We priests have no scruples in calling to account Jem Deady and his kind, but we hate to tackle the "big-wigs," and they despise us for our cowardice. Isn't that it?

Letheby—It would seem so, father.

Fr. Dan—However, let's talk about your fishing boat. Ormsby warns me it may become a very perilous enterprise.

Letheby—Oh, I've advanced too far now to retreat. Besides the Board of Public Works has at last given its consent, thanks to Ormsby himself.

Fr. Dan—Indeed! And they'll advance all the money?

Letheby—No; only two thirds—four hundred pounds—principal and interest to be paid back in two years.

Fr. Dan—Good! Good! And the other two hundred?

Letheby—Subscribed by twenty merchants who have taken shares in the boat. She is already on the stocks at Belfast and will be ready by the first of May when she will be christened "The Star of the Sea" and make her first run with the fishing fleet.

Fr. Dan—Splendid! My, father, but you have the Lamp of Alladdin. And the shirt factory?

Letheby—That's coming along all right, too. Within a week, I shall have fifteen machines in operation, and my manager assures me that when the initial expenses are paid, the girls will be able to earn easily from eight to twelve shillings a week.

Fr. Dan—My, my, but that's good, 'twill be a great help to the poor people (taking his hand) God bless you. Father you are a wonderful fellow (lights appear in chapel and cottage. Bell tolls in chapel tower.)

Letheby (hearing bell.) The call for Benediction. Excuse me, father, while I prepare inside. (exit into cottage.)

Fr. Dan (looking after him.) What a treasure he is. And the Bishop sent him here to break my heart. Well, it's an old way his Lordship has of returning good for evil (exit into chapel.)

(dark stage—moonlight.)

(N. B.—stop bell in chapel and start organ—N. B.—peasants from R. and L. come slowly on stage, in varied groups and from both sides, and enter chapel, preceded by altar boys in costume with cross and censer. Enter Mrs. D. from cottage with Jamesey and Mary, Jamesey dressed as an altar boy. As she is about enter chapel, Jem Deady, who has entered quietly, pulls at her dress.—Caution: Don't let action of peasants, male and female, here be too formal.)

Mrs. D.—Arrah, stop your teasin' ye omadhaun (exit with children into chapel.)

Jem (looking after boy.) "Whin swallows wear overcoats," says she. (produces sheet of music) I'm to sing this hymn in the choir tonight by a special request of Fr. Letheby himself, but begorrah, I can't seem to get the tune through me pipes—(singing in low voice.) "Holy, holy, holy,"—

Fagan (who has entered and is watching from stage L.) May the tune choke ye, ye hypocrite.

Jem—Yerra, if I wasn't goin' to me holy church this blissed minute, I'd murder ye for them words, you skunk.

Fagan (snapping fingers.) That for ye an' your church!

Jem (picking up stone, throws it at Fagan, who grunts as if struck and exits L.) It's mighty strange, but every time I lays eyes on that divil, I always forget the tin Commandments, especially, the fifth (exit into chapel, humming the tune.) "Holy, holy, holy."—

(Old man and woman enter from cottage and exeunt into chapel—enter Beatta and Ormsby R., Ormsby escorting her as far as the chapel steps—cease organ in chapel.)

Beatta (hand on chapel door.) You are still opposed to entering?

Ormsby—No, Beatta, in my present state of mind to attend your Benediction now would be only a mockery on my part, and I will not deceive you or myself. But I'll see you after Benediction, may I?

Beatta (as you wish.) (Ormsby bows and retires up stage.)

Beatta (to herself) He's right. After all it's better to be thoroughly honest with God—and with ourselves (exit into chapel.)

Solo in chapel—"Lead, Kindly Light." Baritone preferred —first only Pantomine by Ormsby to represent the thought of the hymn. Note:—This pantomine is important as a lead to the climax of this act.

Ormsby (at conclusion of hymn, reflectively.) Lead Thou me on (as he retires up the stage, R. Enter L., Alice Moylan; the blind girl led by her sister Mary, age 12 or 13.)

Alice (weakly) Mary, I'm so tired. Let me rest awhile before entering. (Mary places her on chapel steps.)

Ormsby (approaching) My poor girl, you are not well. May I ask what ails you?

Mary—My poor sister, sir, is blind.

Ormsby—Blind and so young? Terrible!

Alice—Terrible enough, sir,—but welcome be the will of God.

Ormsby—Tell me, girl, were you born blind?

Alice—No, sir, this is a scourge from heaven in punishment of my sins.

Ormsby—But how came it about?

Alice—Sir, once, not so very long ago—I was the village beauty, so they said. The thought made me proud and vain. One day, while admiring myself before my looking glass, I heard a noise at our kitchen door, as of some one trying to enter. Angry at being disturbed, I burst from my room and saw in the kitchen doorway the repulsive countenance of Nance, the outcast, her face disfigured by some loathsome desease. She begged for alms, but I, flushed with the thought of my own charms shouted in derision, "Well, you are a beauty." And then she said (breaks down) Oh, you tell him, Mary, I cannot

bear to repeat her words.

Mary—She said, "I'm not as handsome as you, alanna,—there was once when perhaps I was—but your time may come," she said "Mockin' is catchin'; mockin' is catchin'." And then, sir, she cursed my poor sister, oh! so wickedly and went away.

Alice—Yes, and all that day I could not get the thought of my sins out of my head. But that night at a party my vanity all came back again, and I was glorying in the flattery of the young men around me, when suddenly I grew dazed and ill.

Mary—So that I had to take her from the room and lead her home, sir.

Alice—Yes; and all that night I never slept. That outcast's stricken face was always coming before me to haunt me—staring at me out of the darkness, staring, till in sheer madness and terror, I leaned from my bed and fell exhausted upon the floor. And then the frightful anger of God coming down upon me suddenly flashed across my mind, and I screamed, and tore my hair, and bit at the window pane, and shrieked, "Don't, oh Lord, oh, don't." Till I fell again, then I dragged myself across the floor to a picture of the Blessed Virgin upon the wall, and with tears a-streaming, I begged of her, "You won't let Him, mother, you won't let Him!" But the Virgin's face only glared down on me coldly, pitilessly—and then—in an instant—even as I gazed upon it—it faded completely away; and then I realized, oh, my God!—breaks completely down—I was blind—stone blind.

Mary (with arms around her) Oh, Lord, have mercy on my poor sister!

Ormsby (moved) Horrible! Horrible, (aside) This is indeed the most stricken and afflicted of the flock. (aloud) My girl, have you seen a doctor about this?

Alice (Gradually recovering) Oh, yes, but he says there is no cure for me.

Ormsby—But you are a Catholic. Have you consulted your confessor?

Alice—Oh, yes, and kind Father Letheby visits me every day with words of consolation.

Ormsby—Yes; and what does he say about your trouble?

Alice—He says it is some mysterious dispensation of the

Almighty, which I cannot now understand, but that some day I shall understand and see that it is all God's mercy and not His anger.

Ormsby—And do you believe what the priest says?

Alice—I believe it most firmly. Who knows but that something more dreadful was in store for me, and God, in His wonderful mercy, has just saved me from it? So, sir, I am quite resigned to His will and thankful for all His goodness to me.

Ormsby (aside) Such faith I have not seen in all my days! (aloud) My child, tell me—and tell me honestly—I have a strange reason for asking—do you really believe in your heart and soul—without reserve—that it is the love of God which thus afflicted you?

Alice—I believe it by my hopes of eternal life.

Ormsby—And are you really glad because He has thus afflicted you?

Alice—Glad and truly happy, only for mother, who frets so, I would not care to be well again.

Ormsby—But do you not sometimes grieve for the loss of your beauty?

Alice—Why should I? when I know that God will give me back my beauty in heaven and a thousand times greater there for all He permits me to suffer here.

Ormsby (aside) It is the sublime and the impossible (aloud) —But can you—do you—forgive the woman, Nance, the outcast, whose curse has thus been visited upon you?

Alice—I have long since forgiven her from the bottom of my heart. And now I am going into Benediction to pray—and oh! so hard for her return to grace and the salvation of her immortal soul (rising to enter chapel.)

Ormsby (after a long pause) will you also pray in there—and strongly too, for my salvation?

Alice—Do you sincerely wish salvation?

Ormsby—I wish to see the light of God, *your* God.

Alice—Then I will pray for you—and for poor Nance too.—(exit with Mary into chapel.)

Ormsby (looking into chapel after her) If there be indeed a God, He must—He will hear the prayer of this, His saint and martyr. (retires thoughtfully up stage and exit R.)

Note—(Chorus in chapel, "Nearer, my God to Thee.")

(Enter Nance the Outcast, L. in fear and trembling, looking about to see if she is observed. As hymn progresses, she goes through pantomime—at the words "e'en though it be a cross that raiseth me," kneels at foot of large cross, making the picture "Rock of Ages." At the conclusion of hymn, she throws herself in abject despair on the steps of the chapel.)

(Enter Letheby, from cottage. Later followed by Ormsby, who remains in the background watching this scene until occur his lines.)

Note:—(During the succeeding dialogue, choir in chapel chants softly "Tantum Ergo.")

Letheby (about to enter chapel finds Nance on the steps) Halloa! What have we here? pulls back Nance's shawl from her face (recognizes her.) You, Nance? What do you want here?

Nance—That's a queer question for a priest to be askin'. What did the poor Magdalen want when she went to Christ himself, a bigger man than you and wasn't turned away either?

Letheby—Yes; but she repented and loved Christ, and was prepared to die rather than sin again.

Nance—And how do you know but that I'm the same? Do you know more than that God above you? And He is my witness here tonight before His Blessed and only Son that all hell fire won't make me fall again. Hell fire? Oh! it isn't hell fire I'm afraid of, but the face of Christ and yours. Hiding her face again—

Letheby (moved) Poor Nance, may God help and pardon you!

Nance—Oh, if you had only had those same kindly words for me three months ago, how much misery you would have saved me! But you had the hard word, Father Letheby, and it almost drove me wild to think as how you said from the altar as how I wasn't fit to come and mix with the people at Holy Mass.

Letheby—What else was I to say.

Nance—Nothing then perhaps. But oh, you didn't know how many and many a night—in cold and hunger—when you were asleep in your warm bed—how I stole from my hovel of a home—here to the chapel door, and peeped in through the

key-hole to where His Sacred Heart was burning with love for sinners; for, oh, I thought perhaps He would come out, when no one was looking, and speak to me—but no, no. He and you and all the world was against me—Oh, but it was hard, hard—(breaks down.)

Letheby—Speak low, Nance, the men inside will hear you.

Nance—They've heard worse from my lips than what I'm saying tonight, God help me, it isn't the men nor their doings that I care about; but when the young girls cross the street lest they should come near me; and the decent mothers throw their aprons over their children's heads lest they should see me, oh that's what breaks my heart entirely.

Letheby (deeply moved) Well, what is it to be now, Nance? are you resolved to change your life?

Nance—Verral, what else would bring be here tonight.

Letheby—Are you prepared to make a full sincere confession?

Nance—This very moment, with God's blessing.

Letheby—Then I will hear you.

(As they start toward the rectory, the Benediction bell rings inside the chapel.)

Letheby—Wait! The Benediction. (Kneel—Letheby and Nance kneel together C. in adoration—Second bell.)

Ormsby (Who has everheard the above dialogue with apparent interest and emotion) Oh, what a church! that begets saints—and redeems sinners! (Third Benediction bell) Yea, and unto them that walk in darkness bringeth—

(Note:—On the word "bringeth" a light coming through the window of the chapel strikes Ormsby in the face. He starts back with great emotion and gives his concluding lines.)

Ormsby—The light! The light! The scales have fallen. I see and I adore. (Kneels in adoration beside Letheby and Nance C. L.)

—Picture till curtain—

As curtain descends choir in chapel sing "Holy God."

ACT III.

(Scene.—Along the beach at Kilronan. Woodland wings with exits R. & L. Cliff effects and rocks on beach—small row boat in water—Sea-drop with Nance discovered seated on a rock up stage C.)

Nance.—Oh, how that sea tempts me! beckons me to quit the hard world that hates and despises me, and find a refuge there in the bosom of the deep. But, no, no! I promised God and the good priest in the confessional that I would despair no more, and I will keep my word. (Music and revelry off stage.) Oh, how the people are enjoying themselves at Beatta's wedding.—Laughter off stage. (They laugh and make merry.) Everyone is welcome at the feast but me, and I must keep away as if I were contagion. Oh, but the way of the outcast is hard. I have no friend in the wide, wide world. (pause.) Yes, there is one friend, Father Letheby, and he is doing his best to help me. He has given me this note (producing it) to go to work at his factory. But oh, I'm afraid to go there, for I know that the girls will spurn me and drive me away, perhaps with violence. And then what shall I do? Where shall I turn to make an honest living. For I must live, and I will be honest. Oh, God in heaven help me. (enter Fagan down cliff.)

Fagan.—Halloa, Nance. Thinking agin of suicide, eh?

Nance (trying to avoid him.) No; thinking of how to live and avoid the sight of creatures like you.

Fagan.—Ho! Ho! On the reform again, eh? I was wandering what kept you from the ale-house of late. We missed your illigent company. (drawing close to her and blocking her way.)

Nance.—Enough, villain, let me pass.

Fagan.—Not 'til I see what you have in yor hand there. Shure it wouldn't be one of me owld love letters, would it? Well at all events, it ain't becoming to a lady that's on the reform to be concealing a note from a gintleman (grabs note from her hand and reads) Ho! Ho! a note from me fine friend Fr. Letheby, is it? An' so yo're goin' to work at his factory, eh? Well, if the girls 'll condisind to work beside the

likes of ye, I hope the priest will pay you better wages than he's payin' thim, the slave drivin' robber. (throws note on ground.)

Nance. (picks up note.) Begone, tempter. Your past and mine are dead. You are to me nothing now but a corpse. (exits proudly.)

Fagan. (looking after her.) Ha! me proud damsel; yer reform won't last long. You'll be back at your old ways, I'm thinkin'. (goes up stage and looks off at ship.) There she rides at anchor, the priest's new fishin' boat. "The Star of the Say", he calls her. Faith an' its at the bottom of the say she'll be, whin me friend Hogan gets through with her this day. Ha! me fine new curate, little do ye know there's enlisted in your crew an imp of hell, hired by mesilf, to sink your illigant schooner on thim sunken rocks beyant. (musing) She's a fine craft though. Begorrah, 'tis almost a crime to sink her. But, sink she must and sink she will. (viciously) Ha, me fine Father Letheby, ye thought to chastise me, did ye? an' make a show out of me? But I'll drag ye down, down, down to where the informer can crow over ye to his heart's content— (looking again off stage) (gloating—then turns and looks off opposite side.) But where's me man Hogan? 'tis time he were here. (a rough singing voice is heard off stage) Yiss; here's

(Enter Hogan, singing a snatch of a sailor's song....as he reaches L. C., Fagan covers his mouth with his hand to stop his singing, then looks around carefully to see that they are not observed.)

Fagan.—Well, me man, what's the news?

Hogan.—The best.

Fagan.—Have ye got the auger?

Hogan.—Yiss, an' a mighty fine tool it is too. (giving it to Fagan for inspection.)

Fagan.—Is it sharp?

Hogan.—'Twould bore through a plate of steel.

Fagan.—Good, (gives back auger) An' did you loosen her rudder?

Hogan.—This mornin' whin no one was on deck but mesilf.

Fagan.—Good agin! Now remimber yer instructions. Whin the boat's sailing over thim sunken rocks beyant, steal yer way

down into her hold an' drill a hole in her keel. An' remimber, do your work well or ye gets no pay whin ye comes back.

Hogan.—I may nivver come back from this job, Mr. Fagan, so I'll have me money in advance, if yè plase.

Fagan.—No; whin ye comes back.

Hogan (fiercely) Now, I says, or I throws up the hold job.

Fagan.—Well, if ye promise not to git drunk an' forgit what I'm payin' ye for.

Hogan.—Divil a drunk! so hand me over me money, if ye plaze.

Fagan.—after counting out money slowly and grudgingly, hands him notes, and at the same time disgruntled voices of factory girls are heard off stage—There! now be off wid ye—urging him off—Here come the factory girls, an' it won't do for us to be seen collogin' together.

Hogan (counting money) Wait a bit! Wait a bit. There's five pounds short, ye robber.

Fagan. (recounting money.) Oh, so there is. My, but me eyesight's gitting bad.—fishing for more money—

Hogan.—Blasht yer eyesight! Give me my five pounds.

Fagan (giving him another note.) There! Now away wid ye (exit Hogan singing) (enter forelady and group of factory girls, excitedly talking together.)

Forelady.—I say I won't go to work today. This ought to be a holiday, the day of Beatta's wedding and the trip of the "Star of the Sea." The priest is too hard on us, I say, and his wages is worse than starvation. (girls brumble assent.)

Fagan.—Right ye are, lass, why should ye poor things be killin' yourselves wid work an' for what? For the priest to be turnin' a good penny out of the sweat of your brows.

Forelady.—Mr. Fagan is right, girls.

Fagan.—Of course I'm right, lass. An' ye'll all believe me more whin I tell ye the news.

Girls.—News? What news? (drawing near.)

Fagan.—Listen, ye're to have a lady, yiss a mighty fine lady to work wid yez from now on.

Girls.—A lady? Who is she?

Fagan.—Nance, the outcast.

Girls. (withdrawing with a groan) No?

Fagan.—Yiss; by orders of Father Letheby, himself. She's on her way now to the factory.

Forelady.—Priest or no priest, I'll not work with her. I'll strike first.

Girls.—Yes'm we'll all strike. Away with her! Outcast! Outcast! (exits shouting.)

Fagan. (gloating) Ha, me fine Father Letheby, I raised a pretty storm over your head. You'll have a strike on your hands before long, and thin we'll see what profit ye'll make out of your illigant factory (exit) (enter Jem, male peasants, and Murphy, a character old man.)

Murphy.—No, Jem; I say she has a lisht to port.

Jem.—Where's your eyes, ye lubber? can't ye see she lanes to starboard. My, but ain't she a beauty!

Murphy. (with matches trying to light his pipe. Jem's bus. is unseen by Murphy, to blow out his matches so that he never lights his pipe. Bus. ad lib., but not to be overdone.) 'Twill take six men to navigate her, but shure 'tis aisy to git thim for the wages the priest is offerin'.

Jem.—How much?

Murphy.—Fifteen shilling a week an' a share in the profits.

Jem.—Begor, I'd work for thim wages myself. 'Tis more profitable than repairing roofs.

Murphy.—Arrah, go long, ye omadhaun; what do ye know about sea-farin' anyhow?

Jem.—Shure, ain't it part of a roofer's business to go aloft?—all laugh—An' did I never tell yez how I was a pilot once?

Murphy.—No, Jem; tell us about it.

Jem.—Thin gather forninst me. (peasants gather about him) —Well, one day about a year ago, I was fishin' in me dory off thim sunken rocks beyant (pointing R.) whin an English schooner came sailin' by. It seems her captain was asleep in his cabin below as drunk as a lord—an' the mate bein' a stranger in these parts, was a wee bit-a-scaird of his surroundings.

Murphy.—An' well he might be, Jem! 'Tis a mighty bad spot out there, especially in a storm.

Jem.—Thrue for ye, Mike (pipe bus.) Well, the mate sings out to me from on deck, "Halloa," says he, "Halloa" says I, just as civil as himself, mind ye. "Are ye a pilot?" says he.

"That I am," says I. Of course I wasn't.

Murphy—Of course you wasn't. Shure any fool knows that.

Jem.—You know it, don't you?

Murphy.—Shure I know it.

Jem.—Well! (laughter and pipe bus.) Well, I saw a chance to earn an honest penny by takin' the job. "Do you know this 'arbor?" says he, "That I do," says I, "an' every rock in it."

Murphy. (laughing) Every rock in it! Ha! Ha! (pipe bus.)

Jem.—"Thin come aboard," says he. So up I climbs on deck an' grabs the wheel, as if I'd been a steersman all me life. Well, sirs, it wasn't five minutes before we was hard an' fast on one of thim sunken rocks beyant.

Murphy.—Wow, wow says the fox.

Jem. (nettled at being interrupted) May the devil fly away wid you an' the fox, (pipe bus.) Well, the say came streamin' into the howld of the boat in bucketfuls. Up rushes the mate to me wid blood in his eye, an' says he, flourishin' a marlin' spike over my head, "Ye bloomin' hidiot," says he, "I thought you told me you knew every rock in this bloody, bloomin' harbor." "I do," says I; "An' I'm tellin' ye we're on top of one of thim now."

Murphy. (laughing heartily) On top of one of thim now? "Wow, wow, says the fox" (falls laughing into a peasant's arms.)

(Enter Fr. Letheby and Campion L.)

Letheby—Good morning, men. (goes up C.)

Campion. (very pleasantly) Good morning, boys. (joins Fr. L.)

Jem. (surprised at Campion's tone and aside to peasants) Boys! an' from him?

Murphy—Begorrah, it was blackguards an' serfs before.

Jem.—But we'll be as civil as himself. Good mornin' Captain, an' many happy returns of the day to yourself an' the beautiful bride and groom.

Campion. (coming down) Thank you kindly sir. And now permit me to invite you all to go up to the castle as my and my daughter's guests and participate in the wedding feast.

Go and enjoy yourselves to your hearts' content.

Jem. (scratching his head and aside to peasants) Begorrah, thim's the first kind words I ivver heard from that man's lips. What's come over him at all, at all? (aloud) Thank ye kindly, Captain. Now, boys, a cheer for Captain Campion. Hip-hip-horroo! (Jem and peasants exeunt L.—cheering heartily.)

Campion. (looking after them) Father, would you believe it? that cheer is the sweetest sound I have heard in years. It has touched me deeply.

Letheby.—It ought to teach you, Captain, that these poor people are best governed by kindness.

Campion.—It does;; but I'm afraid I have learned the lesson too late. Brought up in the rough school of the soldier, I have never up to now been able to shake off a feeling of contempt for these poor, uneducated peasants—and, as you pointed out to me recently, I'm afraid I have been treating them too harshly. Besides, I've been a bad Catholic (crosses to R. C.) This fact my son-in-law, Ormsby, lately an unbeliever, has particularly impressed me, not by words, but by his silent example. You know, at first I did not care a pin whether he was a Turk, a fire-worshipper or an atheist, so long as he married Beatta.

Letheby.—Now, Captain, you see that the Church is right, do you not?

Campion. (with conviction) Absolutely right. My daughter's espousal would have been incomplete, yea, a spiritual mockery had she not married a Catholic, and a true one.

Letheby.—Am I to infer Captain, that you intend to turn over a new leaf yourself?

Campion.—Yes. I am running into years and must brush up, as if the end were near. Believe me I am sorry I was not at Communion with Beatta and Ormsby this morning, but I promise you we shall all receive the sacrament together, the Sunday after their return from their honeymoon on the continent.

Letheby. (taking his hand) God bless you, sir, and help you to keep that good resolution. (Town clock strikes twelve.)

Campion.—Twelve o'clock—the hour set for the departure of your fishing-schooner, I believe.

Letheby.—Yes; and here comes the crew now. (Hogan

Note:—In the twenty-sixth line some prefer the word Christian.

and five other fisherman L. Hogan drunk but trying to conceal it.)

Letheby.—Good day, men. (All but Hogan salute.) But where is your captain?

Hogan. (who hiccoughs throughout scene) He—hic—refuses to sarve, sir—hic.

Letheby.—Refuses to serve? Why?

Hogan.—He says your demned old hulk is—hic—unlucky.

Letheby. (indignantly.) The "Star of the Sea" unlucky? How?

Hogan.—Whin the boat—hic—was christened, at Belfast, didn't the bottle of champagne—hic—flop into the water without even—hic—breaking?

Letheby.—Well, what of that?

Hogan.—It's a hic—bad omen, sir,—hic—damn bad omen.

Letheby.—Superstitious coward! to disappoint and hamper me so! But begone all of you; I'll get a new captain and crew from Hoydore. (This boat must not sail today.—going R.)

Campion.—Wait, father; perhaps I can be of some assistance to you (crosses to C.—note—Jem and peasants have entered quietly) Men, you know me as a sailor as well as a soldier, do you not?

Fishermen.—Aye, aye, Cap'n.

Campion.—Will you sail under me as captain of the "Star of the Sea?"

Fishermen.—Aye, aye, Cap'n.

Campion.—Now, Father, I volunteer to captain your schooner on her trial trip.

Jem (to peasants) Boys, a cheer for Captain Campion—cheer—

Letheby.—But, Captain, your duty as an officer of the crown.

Campion.—That's all right, father. I am on a furlough for a week—enough time to take our schooner out and return.

Letheby. (taking his hand) Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Campion.—Pray, don't mention it, sir. Now, men, get aboard and prepare to weigh anchor. I will join you presently.

Fishermen.—Aye, aye, Capt'n (move towards small boat up stage.

Campion. (restraining Hogan) Stop! you. I don't want you aboard.

Hogan.—Arrah, why not, Captain dear? Shure the priest has hired me.

Campion.—No matter, you're drunk. Besides, I know you of old for a cut-throat dog.

Hogan.—Is it me, Captain, dear?

Campion. (sternly) Enough! Take off that oil skin.

Hogan. (trembling and aside) If he finds this auger, I'll be kilt. (Aloud) Oh, Captain dear—

Campion. (shaking him) Enough, I say. Off with that coat —shakes him again and auger falls to ground (Campion picks it up) Halloa, what's this? an auger?

Jem.—Treachery!

Compion. (seizing Hogan and forcing him to his knee) Scoundrel, what were you going to do with this? Speak.

Hogan. (trembling violently) Sink her, Captain.

Campion.—Sink her?

Hogan.—Yiss; but oh, don't be hard on me. It's me master's at the bottom of it all.

Campion.—Your master? Who?

Hogan.—Mr. Fagan, sir.

Omnes.—Fagan!

Hogan.—Yiss;here's some of the notes he gave me to do the dirty work (hands note to Campion, who turns them over to Letheby.)

Campion.—Dog, you ought to be shot for this (yanks him to his feet) but begone, and remember that if I ever catch you or your hellish master again in Kilronan, I'll have you both strung up to the nearest tree.

Jem.—An' if you don't, Captain, I will—kicks Hogan off L.

Campion. (with Hogan's oilskin and hat in his hand) Now, (Sailors row off R. in small boat.)
boys we're a man short. Which of you knows anything about sea-faring?

Murphy. (laughing) Jem Deady does, sir—he's a piolet.

Jem.—Well, Captain, me regular trade is climbin' roofs instead of masts.

Campion.—Oh, I guess we can use you aboard all right.

Jem (taking coat and hat.) Well, here goes (retires up stage with peasants to don oilskin and hat.)

Campion.—Now, father, I think I'll go up to the castle, change my dress and take leave of Beatta.

Letheby.—I'm afraid the dear girl will be much disturbed about your going on this trip.

Campion.—I'll explain all to her satisfaction (exit with Letheby L.)

Murphy.—surveying Jem now dressed as fisherman.—Begor, Jem, but you're the picture of old neptune himself.

Jem.—If I only had his three-cornered pitch-fork.

Mike (taking his hand.) Well, good-bye, Jem. A pleasant trip and a big catch. But remember Jem, whatever you do, don't forget you're a pilot (exit with peasants L. laughing.)

Jem.—Arrah, go long, ye landlubbers, that don't know the difference betune a whale an' a rhinosorsoros (goes up C.) Halloa, the ship's boat is gone off without me. Nivver mind, I'll wait for the Captain's gig. Begor I feel like a fish out of wather in these clothes. I wonder what Mrs. D'Arcy an' the orphans would say, if they could only see me now (dances about the stage in sailor fashion.)

(Enter Mrs. D'Arcy, with Jamesey and Mary—starts at seeing Jem.)

Mrs. D.—well in the name of goodness, Jem Deady, phwat are ye doin' in thim clothes? Surely to hiven ye haven't turned fisherman.

Jem.—You've said the word, Mrs. D'Arcy. I'm off in his Riverence's boat in a jiffy. So, good-bye, me darlint!

Mrs. D. (affected) Yerra, Jem, ye wouldn't be after lavin' mesilf an' the orphans that way, would ye?

James.—Don't go away, Jem, I don't want you to.

Mary.—Stay home, Jem, I'd be so lonesome without you.

Jem. (puzzled and aside.) Begorrah, I'd habe to be a stone to refuse them childer. (aloud.) Well, me good woman, I didn't think ye'd take my goin' away so hard; I'm mighty sorry; but, ye see, it's me duty.

Mrs. D.—Duty, is it? Musha thin, how many times have ye towld me that your only duty now in the world was by mesilf and the orphans here? Oh, but now I see what a goose I was

to be listenin' to ye. 'Twas all blarney, all blarney (crosses to L.) Men are all desavers, bas desavers.

Jem.—All but one, Mrs. D'Arcy—an' that's mesilf. (aside and looking off to sea R.) Begorrah, what a change has come over that fishin' schooner all of a sudden. It don't seem as invitin' now as it was. I wonder if it's really unlucky, as they say (aloud) Well, Mrs. D'Arcy, if I hadn't given me word to the Captain and the priest—

Mrs. D.—Yerra, the priest'd nivver ax ye to keep your word, if he knew ye wor engaged to be married.

Jem (greatly surprised.) Engaged to be married, is it? Begorrah thin that's news to be.

Mrs. D.—Ye know well enough what I mane. Ye've been courtin' me for the last six months, ain't ye?

Jem,—Yiss, an' for the last six years too.

Mrs. D.—Well, thin, phwat kind of a father do ye expect to make for thim orphans, if ye take up the fishin' trade an' keep a runnin' in an' out to sea an' riskin' your life every minute? Shure ye might as well not be a father at all, at all.

Jem (reflectively) Musha thin I nivver thought of that (aside) What's this quare feelin' comin' over me at all, at all? Begorrah, I think I'm gettin' seasick already—aloud—well, Mrs. D'Arcy, considerin' your tinder remarks an' the kind feelin's of the orphans here, though I hates to break my word to the Captain an' the priest, still I'll promise to stay at home an' work at me owld trade—repairin' the roof of the chapel again—but only on one consideration.

Mrs. D.—What do ye mane, Jem?

Jem.—That ye consint to have the banns of marriage betune us published at high Mass nixt Sunday.

Mrs. D. (cooly) Yerra, Now, that's rather soon, ain't it, Jem?

Jem.—It's sooner than waitin' for swallows to wear overcoats, yiss. But ye consint, don't ye?

Mrs. D (falling in his arms.) I'm speechless.

Jem (embracing.) Darlint of me heart (swing back and forth, with children embracing and imitating their action.) Begorrah, I'm as happy as a clam at high water. Yerra, Mrs. D'Arcy that is an' Mrs. James Deady, that is to be—doe ye

know, fishin' was nivver like this (embracing.) (noise of people talking off L.) Halloa here they come to see the captain an' the boat off. They musn't see me or I'll be put down for a desarter (disturbed.) Oh, me duty, me duty, what'll I do at all, at all?

Mrs. D. (taking his arm.) Do, is it, why, come along wid your future spouse of course. You'll find duty enough in the world; but love, thrue Irish love, a widdy's heart, an' two blissed orphans, ain't found hangin' on every bush.

Jem (pulling children to him.) Come along me blissed angels, I'm your Daddy now for shure. (exit with Mrs. D. and children R.)

(Enter L., Letheby, Fr. Dan, Campion, Beatta and Ormsby.)

Campion.—There, there, child. Don't take on so. After all, it's only for a few days at sea. Besides, I should be lonesome up at that old castle with you and Ormsby away on your wedding tour.

Beatta.—Oh, but the sea is so treacherous, father. Look at those dark clouds gathering on the horizon.

Campion.—Only a squall, my dear. Tell her it's all right, Ormsby. You know all about the sea. Tell her there's no danger. (passes her gently to Ormsby, L.)

Ormsby.—Be of good cheer, dear wife. All will be well.

Campion (taking his hand.) Good-bye, Father Dan.

Fr. Dan.—God's blessing on you, sir.

Campion.—Good-bye, Fr. Letheby.

Letheby.—Good-bye, Captain; and may God guide and prosper you.

Campion.—He certainly will, for your sake. (about to enter row boat which has returned with orasman, when Beatta runs to embrace him.) Once more, my child, good-bye. In all the happiness of your honeymoon, remember and pray for me.

Beatta.—With all my heart, father. And now won't you take this and use it sometimes? (holding up rosary to him in boat.)

Campion.—What is it, my dear?

Beatta.—My rosary (He takes rosary beads, kisses them, puts them slowly in his pocket, and kisses her—then to Ormsby who is standing near.)

(Note: A strain of the "Rosary" to be played here. Last sentence.)

Campion.—Ormsby, my boy, take good care of my angel. Good-bye, good-bye all (is rowed off in the boat R.) (amid the waving of hands by all on stage. Rather long pause.)

Beatta.—How beautifully she rides the waves! But, oh, how I dread those clouds.

Ormsby.—Don't worry dearest, but come, we have but little time to catch our train, you know.

Beatta.—Oh, I was forgetting (crosses to Letheby.) Your Reverence, did I do wrong to try and dissuade my father?

Letheby.—Not at all, my child. Your anxiety was only natural. But be of good cheer. Your father is a brave man and knows not danger on land or sea.

Beatta.—It was the danger of his soul that I was speaking of.

Letheby.—Yes, I know. But pray on, my child, and despair not of his salvation. Your father, I think, is on the road back to God.

Beatta.—Repentant? Oh, Father, are you sure?

Letheby.—As sure as his own words, uttered to me in all sincerity this morning, can make me.

Beatta.—Thanks be to God! Now I am indeed happy and I will not be afraid. (runs over to Fr. Dan.) After all, Daddy Dan, clouds can do no harm, can they?

Fr. Dan.—Only when they bring lightning, my child.

(Train whistle off L.)

Beatta (excitedly.) Gracious! there's our train. (repeat whistle and noises of approaching train.) Good-bye Fr. Letheby (waving to him quickly.) Come, Daddy Dan, you must see us as far as the station. (to Ormsby, who is standing waiting L.) Hurry, Captain, how slow you are! (runs off jubilantly on his arm, followed by Fr. Dan.)

Letheby (alone, enrapt, looking out to sea R.) At last I have topped the pinnacle of success, Sail on, O "Star of the Sea," and prosperous be the voyage for my people's sake! (Exit dreamily R.)

(Note.—Begin to darken stage for storm.)

(Enter Fagan off cliff L., where he remains during soliloquy.)

Fagan.—Blasht that Hogan and his drinkin'. His rotten whiskey has cheated we out of me revinge, I'm afeerd. It looks now, as if the "Star of the Sea" would pass thim sunken rocks in safety, after all me pains to sink her. I'll bet me hat

the drunken fool nivver losened her rudder at all. Damn! (pause) But wait. His factory is left (looking off L.) Yiss; an' the girls are out on strike over Nance. (thinking.) I have it! While they're out of the place, I'll steal in unbeknownst—an' set it on fire. Ha, Ha! (gloating.) Why didn't I think of that beofre? Yiss! the fire's the thing; the fire's the thing. (exit L. over cliff, rubbing hishands in fiendish glee.)

(Enter Alice and Mary. Also Fr. Dan from opp. directions.)

Fr. Dan.—And how are you feeling these days, Alice?

Alice.—Happy, Daddy Dan, Oh, so happy; but I fear it won't last for long.

Fr. Dan.—What! you're not going to heaven so soon, are you?

Alice.—Oh, dear no. But Mr. Ormsby says he is going to bring back with him a great, great doctor from Dublin to cure me; and I don't want to be cured at all.

Fr. Dan.—Still, My child, we're bound to try every natural remedy, but, if all else fails we must leave you in the hands of the Great Physician.

Alice.—That's what I should like best, Daddy Dan.

(First peal of thunder.)

Mary.—Oh, father, hear the thunder!

Fr. Dan (going up C. and looking off R.) Yes, and it bodes no good, I'm afraid for the "Star of the Sea."

Alice.—No, No, God will not permit harm to come to dear Fr. Letheby's schooner.

Fr. Dan.—God sometimes works in very mysterious ways, my child, so now I want you to pray for my new Curate.

Alice.—Pray, Daddy Dan? Why?

Fr. Dan (slowly.) Because something tells me he will soon have crosses like yourself.

Alice.—Oh, not blindness, I hope.

Fr. Dan.—Not as bad as that perhaps, but crosses of his own.

Alice.—Oh, I should be so sorry.

Fr. Dan.—Because you want sorrow and heaven all to yourself. What a selfish little saint you are.

Alice.—I'm not a saint at all, Daddy Dan; but Fr. Letheby is, and why should he be punished with crosses?

Fr. Dan.—Why indeed, my child, except for the reason, "Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth."

(Lightning and thunder, followed by uproar off stage L.)

Girls (off stage L.) Outcast! outcast! away with her.

Fr. Dan.—My soul, if it isn't the factory girls driving poor Nance before them.

Enter Nance, running before the factory girls L. Enter Lethebyby R.—she runs to him for protection and kneels.)

Girls.—Outcast! outcast! away with her (with uplifted, threatening hands.)

Letheby.—Girls, girls, for shame!

Nance.—Save me father, lest they kill me.

Letheby.—Unfeeling wretches, what would you do?

Girls.—Stone her—she's a sinner.

Letheby.—Yes, in your uncharitable eyes, that is the brand of scorn she wears. But I tell you that in heaven before the angels of God there is supreme happiness for this woman's doing penance. Let the one that is without sin among you cast the first stone.

Forelady.—Well, she's an outcast. We won't work with her.

Letheby.—who are you that you should discriminate? Are you better than the Redeemer? Mark you, there was in old Jerusalem a woman such as this (pointing to Nance kneeling beside him.) her sins as red as scarlet—her name a hissing and a by-word on every tongue. But she heard of Christ, of His power and of His miracles, and polluted though she was, she would go to Him. And she found Him as He sat at the feast of the Pharisees, and she knelt at His sacred feet repentant and in tears. And not a Pharisee of them all but thought that He would spurn her, even as she knelt. But He, reading their hearts and hers, opened His sacred lips to pronounce her sentence. And what was that sentence? "Because she hath loved much, much is forgiven her. Woman, go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee."

(Lightning and loud crash of thunder at sea R.)

Fr. Dan (who during above speech, has been standing on rock.) Something is wrong with the"Star of the Sea." (Up stage C. looking off to sea.) Father come here.

Letheby (running up cliff.) Yes, yes, she seems adrift and dragging on the rocks. Heavens, here rudder must be broken.

Fr. Dan.—God forbid in such a place and such a storm!

(Note.—Factory girls group up stage L., gradually male peasants and a group of merchants join in the scene and show in pantomime fear at what is supposed to be passing off stage R. C. —rain.)

Mary.—It's beginning to rain, sister.

Alice.—Yes, let us make our way home. Come, Nance.

Nance.—Home? Alas! what home have I?

Alice.—My house is open to you. You shall live with mother and me.

Nance (sadly) No, Alice. I have done you a terrible wrong. My curse has made you blind. You cannot forgive; you cannot take me under your roof.

Alice.—Nance, I have long since forgiven you. All the world else may despise and forsake you, but I love you.

Nance (looking at her wonderingly.) No?

Alice.—Yes, yes, even as a sister. (Nance falls on her shoulder.)

(Particularly fierce lightning and thunder, etc., a rumbling and grinding heard off R.)

Letheby. — Great God! She's on the ledge—a wreck,—Merciful heaven, is there no help? (all on stage excited.)

Fr. Dan (coming down C.) Alice, Nance, Mary, all of you, down on your knees and pray—pray as you never prayed before —for the souls of Captain Campion and his men. (all peasants on knees—merchants remain standing.)

Letheby (in agony on cliff.) She sinks—she sinks—and the men leap into the raging sea. Oh, God (putting his hands before his eyes.)

Fr. Dan (praying.) "Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord, O Lord, here my voice."

Peasants (responding.) "And let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication."

Letheby (extending his hands towards the sea, and speaking as if to throw his voice far over the waters.) Oh, you poor souls dying in that storm and sea, by the power of Almighty God, delegated to me, His priest, I absolve you from all your sins.

(Fire and smoke off L.)

Fr. Dan.—Look, father, look, your factory's on fire.

Letheby (tumbling down cliff.) My God, Father Dan, ruined —ruined! (drops to feet of Fr. Dan. at C.)

Fagan (Who has entered unseen among the peasants rushing to R. C. with the group of excited merchants.) No not you, ruined—but thim—the merchants (pointing to his R.) bankrupt—robbed! Away with him! to jail with him (rushes fiendishly to seize the kneeling Letheby.)

Fr. Dan (quickly.) Back; nor dare to touch the annointed of God!

Here Fr. Dan flashes in the air a crucifix (illuminated) or a cross of light on the drop curtain—at the same instant a terrible crash of thunder and a lightning bolt—electric effect—comes from the flies, striking Fagan, who drops dead with a loud shriek (Merchants bending over Fagan.) Dead!

Picture

Curtain.

ACT IV.

Scene:—same as act I.

Letheby (discovered seated L. of table, disconsolate.)

Letheby.—Bankrupt! Bankrupt! Oh, the shame of it. Defeated, routed, ruined! But today a week ago the world seemed so bright with roseate hope. Today it is a blank—dark, dismal, black with disgrace indelible as the biting of a burning acid. And for the years to come no prospect but dishonor.—Bankrupt! Bankrupt!

(Enter Fr. Dan L.)

Fr. Dan.—Sh——ame, still brooding? Tut, tut, come, let us take a walk. The sea air will do you good, work the cobwebs off your brain.

Letheby.—Oh, I have had enough of the sea and its works.

Fr. Dan.—Man alive, wher is you courage? Or, do you think you have a monoply of all the misfortune in the world? Tut, tut, think of poor blind Alice Moylan. Is your trouble greater than hers, or is your faith less?

Letheby.—Alice Moylan is a saint.

Fr. Dan.—Well, imitate her then. And again, think of that

poor child, Beatta, returning this day from a broken wedding trip to a fatherless fireside.

Letheby.—Her sorrow will be healed in time. But what will cure dishonor?

Fr. Dan.—Dishonor?

Letheby.—Yes. Am I not a hopeless insolvent? Not a shilling in the world. And yet I am security, sole security, for those merchants, whose savings of a lifetime I guaranteed to protect and preserve, and that I am bound to do on every principle of honor.

Fr. Dan.—Well, looking at it in its worst light, insolvency is not dishonor.

Letheby.—In a priest it is the acme of dishonor.—rises and crosses to bookcase L.—

(Enter Mrs. D'Arcy.)

Mrs. D.—Your Riverence, a committee of merchants is at the door.

Letheby.—My creditors after their money.

Fr. Dan.—Well, never mind. Don't worry. They can't get blood out of a stone. I'll face them for you. (going R.)

Letheby.—No, Father Dan, this is my cross, and I will bear it alone. Mrs. D'Arcy, admit the gentlemen.—exit Mrs. D. R.—

Fr. Dan. (aside) Poor soul! there's no persuading him. It breaks my heart not to be able to help him, but sure I'm as poor as a church mouse myself. Oh, how I wish Ormsby were only here.

(Fr. Dan exits R., as merchants enter R. He looks them over as he exits, with a gesture of despair. Note:—The chairman of the merchants is a consequential looking Englishman, who hems and haws during the following scene:)

Chairman.—Mr. Letheby—we—er—have come, sir—

Letheby.—I understand, gentlemen. You have come to inquire what is going to be done about the ill-fated "Star of the Sea."

Chairman.—Precisely, sir. What is—er—going to be done?

Letheby.—I will pay you back every farthing, principal and interest as soon as I am able.

Chairman.—Hum! as soon as you are—er—able. That will be—er—doomsday, I suppose. You will remember, sir, that it

was—er—only at your repeated solicitations that we—er—consented to advance our money out of our hard earnings.

A merchant.—Hard enough, begor, and got by honest labor.

Chairman.—Pardon me, Mr. Blake, but perhaps I could explain to the Reverend gentleman in—er—more satisfactory manner.

Letheby.—Pardon me, sir, but there is simply nothing to be explained. The boat is at the bottom of the sea, and I'm indebted to you gentlemen in the sum of two thousand pounds and interest.

Chairman.—Er—er—ahem! Er—pardon me, sir but that is not all. You seem to forget, sir, that we are—er—accustomed to repose in our—er—clergymen th—er—deepest confidence, sir.

Letheby.—And how have I forfeited that confidence, may I ask? Am I to blame for the acts of nature? Am I to be held responsible for the villainy of that dead monster, Mr. Fagan?

Chairman.—That is not the point, sir. The—er—fact is, we relied entirely upon your word of honor and—er—did not demand the—er—usual securities for our money. Consequently, we—er—find ourselves in a very awkward predicament, our money gone, sir, and no redress but the—er—law, sir—the law.

Letheby (injured.) You doubt my word of honor?

Chairman.—We—er—have been deceived, sir.

Letheby (indignant.) Deceived? Pray, how?

Chairman (doggedly.) We have been deceived, sir.

Letheby.—Sir, are you aware that your language approaches very close to insult?

Chairman.—The truth's the truth, sir. That boat was a swindle from beginning to end, and we know it. (firmly.)

Merchants.—Yes, a swindle, a swindle.

(Jem enters quietly and unobserved R.)

Letheby.—Gentlemen, I must declare this interview at an end and ask you to retire.

Chairman.—Ask us to retire with our money in your pocket? Turn us out, sir, and by pleasantness, "please be good enough to leave my house."

Jem (rolling up sleeves.) Say the word, your Riverence, an' I'll pitch the whole bloomin' lot into the sea.

Chairman (retiring grumblingly with the others.) We go, sir—but in our place will come the bailiffs, two of them sir, the —er—representatives of the law, sir. They are outside even now, sir, awaiting our orders to—er—proceed and attach, sir—

Jem (pushing him out the door R.) Attach an' be damned to ye. (exeunt chairman and merchants R.)

Jem.—Poor gintleman, poor gintleman. To think of all his trouble an' no one to help him (sits at table C.) Oh, wirra, wirra, wirra! To think of him lying in the cold debtor's jail on the stone floor wid nothing to eat but the black bread an' the sour wather. Oh, wirra, wirra, wirra! (rises and goes to window.) Yiss; thim's two bailiffs shure enough. But, by the holy St. Patrick! they'll nivver touch his Riverence or anythin' belongin' to him, except over my dead body. No, ye divils, come, come an' thry it. Come on I say, come on (squares off, and rushes around stage wildly, fighting imaginary bailiffs; finally drops into chair C.) (with his head in his hands.)

Mrs. D. (who has entered during the above business and seen Jem's antics with surprise.) In the name of hiven, Jem Deady, phwat's the matter wid ye now?

Jem.—Go way woman, I'm half mad wid thinkin'.

Mrs. D.—Wid drinkin' ye mane. It's the daylirius trimmers ye have got again, ye vagabond. Oh, but me heart's broke wid ye entoirely. Why did I ivver marry ye at all, at all? (sobbing.) An' me wid thim two blissed orphans on me hands (goes to window.) (looks out and then returns to him.) Wake up ye omadhaun. Is it after slapin' ye'd be wid thim two Dublin Jackeens outside awaitin' to pounce down on his Riverence, and all that belongs to him? (looking at him with contempt.) You're a fine A. O. H., ain't ye?

Jem. (rising.) Tare an' hounds! Flesh and blood! can't stand this. (thinks of something suddenly, rushes to hatrack and takes cassock and beretta.) I have it! Get me a Roman collar phwile you'd be sayin' sharp sticks (beginning to get into cassock.)

Mrs. D.—A Roman collar, Jem?

Jem (dressing.) Yiss; a priest's collar and necktie (a knock on outside door R.) quick they're comin'.

Mrs. D.—Oh, it's mad he is, ravin' mad (exit L.)

Jem (surveying himself dressed in cassock and beretta.) Me mother always wanted me to be a priest an' begorrah I'm one at last.

(Re-enter Mrs. D. with Roman collar, which she helps Jem to adjust.)

Jem.—Now, me good spouse, run over to the ale-house and tell the "Holy Terrors" to come here in a jiffy. I may need thim in case of emergency.

Mrs. D. (alarmed.) Emergency, Jem? Musha, in the name of hiven and thim blissed orphans, phwat would ye be doin' at all, at all? (another knock at the door.)

Jem.—Doin' is it? Begorrah, I'm goin' to give thim a run for their money, they'll nivver forget the longest day they live.

Mrs. D.—Oh, Jem, me darlint, I knew ye wouldn't desert the priest in his trouble (embraces Jem.)

Jem (pushes her away.) Stop that woman—Remimber the cloth (pointing to the cassock.) (loud knock R.) (Mrs. D. goes to door.)

Jem (softly to her—at the door.) Psh! Listen. Introduce me as his riverence—Fr. Letheby, D. D.

Mrs. D. (In surprise.) Fr. Letheby?

Jem.—Yiss; don't forget the D. D. (exit Mrs. D. Jem takes a book from case and sits L. of table C., with a very dignified air.) Now I hopes I didn't lose me timper. *

Mrs. D. (Shows in Diggins and Bobbs, bailiffs, R.)

Mrs. D.—This way gintlemen. There's himself ye're after, Fr. Letheby, D. D. (making a lot of the D. D.)

(Note: Diggins is tall and dignified; Bobbs, an Englishman, with cockney dialect, is short, nervous and fretful.

Diggins. (trying to attract Jem's attention.) Ahem, sir, ahem!

Jem (without looking from book.) Go away woman; can't ye see I'm studyin' me sermon for nixt Sunday mornin'?

Diggins (louder.) Ahem, sir, ahem!

Jem (same bus. as before.) ahem yourself.

Diggins.—Excuse this interruption, Mr. Letheby, but we are the bailiffs.

Jem (turning and affecting surprise.) Oh, so ye are (rises.) Sit down, ye divils, an' give your horns a rest.

*Local announcements can be funny here.

Bobbs. (amazed at language) 'Orns, sir, 'orns?

Jem.—Oh, excuse me, gintlemen, I was only quotin' a part of one of me sermons (going to arrange chairs for them at R. C.)

Bobbs. (to himself) 'is sermons must be full of 'ell fire.

(Is about to sit, when Jem from behind pulls the chair from under him and he sprawls on the floor—Mrs. D. all the while trying to keep from laughing.)

Jem. (lifting up Bobbs) Are ye hurt, man (Bobbs grunts.)

Bobbs. (aside) If he wasn't a reverant, I'd a said he'd did that on poipose.

Jem. (resuming seat at left of table.) Well, gintlemen, I suppose ye've come after me proputty.

Diggins. (looking over bunch of legal papers.) Yes; and I regret to say, your person, if your property be not sufficient to satisfy the several executions (showing seals of papers to audience.)

Jem. (rising and rolling up sleeves.) Ho! Ho! so there's goin' to be an execution, is there? Well, thin, I guess I know who's goin' to be the executioner—

Mrs. D. (bursts into loud guffaw and runs out.)

Bobbs (very nervous, goes to door, returns to Diggins and aside) Diggins I don't loike that laff. (Eyes everything in the room suspiciously.)

Diggins.—Nonsense, Bobbs. (aloud) As I was saying, Mr. Letheby—

Mrs. D. (through window) The boys is comin'. (disappears.)

(Diggins and Bobbs rise and turn about as if to discover the source of voice—Bobbs very nervous.)

Diggins.—What was that?

Jem (seated) I heard nuthin'. Did ye?

Diggins.—solemnly—I thought I heard a woman's voice saying "The boys are coming."

Jem.—Not at all, man, not at all. This house is haunted, that's all.

Diggins and Bobbs. (together and staring at him.) Haunted?

Jem.—Yiss by the ghost of a bailiff that dropped dead onst in that very chair of yours—pointing to Diggins' chair—

(Bus. with chair by Diggins and Bobbs.)

Bobbs (aside to Diggins) Diggins, I smell trouble. Think

we'd best remove to proputty at once, sir.

Diggins.—You're right, Bobbs, (Aloud.) Begin with the books.

(Bobbs crosses Diggins and starts towards bookcase—is intercepted by Jem.)

Jem (assuming defiant attitude.) Not a single book (pushes Bobbs.)

Diggins (advancing with authority) Mr. Letheby, reflect what you are doing, sir, defying the law.

Bobbs (trembling behind Diggins) Haye, her Majesty's law.

Diggins.—And furthermore reflect, sir, that if you refuse to permit us to remove your personal property, we shall be under the painful necessity of taking your body, sir.

Bobbs (bus. as before) Haye, harresting you, sir (Jem waves at him contemptuously.)

Jem.—Oh, no you won't.

Diggins (advancing with Bobbs behind him) We certainly shall, sir.

Jem (facing them) You shall not, sir (pushes his stomach against Diggins and both he and Bobbs sprawl backwards.) Now be aisy (as they pick themselves up.) 'Tis for your own good I'm spakin'. Sit down an' I'll tell you why (they sit down again.) (Presently peasants with Mrs. D. are seen peeking at window.) As a priest it is my duty to inform ye that there ain't in all her Majesty's dominions a more fiendish set of ruffians than right here in me own parish. And the most blood thirsty gang of thim all is a secret society of murderers called the "Holy Terrors."

Diggins.—Yes, we have already been warned to be on our guard against the villains.

Bobbs.—Haye, an' especially against their leader. 'An houtrageous scoundrel by the name of—of (trying to recollect) —Jem—Jem Deady, sir.

Jem.—But whist! (mysteriously) Don't nintion his name above a whisper—He's a divil incarnate. He eats raw meat. An' drinks hot blood, bailiffs preferred—Bobbs in fright slips from chair to floor—But now to me point (sitting on table, and secretly making signals to the peasants to enter) What did this unhung bailiff-eater an' his gang of cut-throats do in this very place not ten years ago?

Diggins and Bobbs. (faltering) Wh-what?

Jem.—Well, sirs, there was a bailiff—jist like yourselves—an honest man—mind ye, as ever lived—came down here from Dublin—jist like yourselves—to serve papers on a priest—jist like meself—an' how did those murderin' villains treat that poor process sarver ?

(Peasants are on, grouped behind the bailiffs.)

Diggins and Bobbs (faltering) We—we don't know.

Jem (Stepping in between them.) Well, me an' the Holy Terrors will show ye, eh boys?

Peasants.—Shure, Jem, Hurroo!

Diggins and Bobbs (in mortal terror.) J-Jem? (kneeling in fear.)

Jem (removing cassock.) Yiss, ye divils, Mr. James Deady at your sarvice an' his particular friends, the Holy Terrors.

Diggins and Bobbs (crouching together.) Mercy! Mercy!

Jem.—Now ye process-sarvers, will ye go back to Dublin in peace or in peaces?

Diggins and Bobbs.—In peace, in peace.

Jem.—An' do ye swear nivver to come back?

Diggins and Bobbs (holding up hand.) We—we swear; we swear.

Jem.—Thin, the boys will escort ye as far as the station. Away with thim, boys. (peasants rush bailiffs R., passing window off stage.)

Mrs. D. (to Jem, putting on his coat.) Jem, me darlint, wid all your faults I love ye still. (embraces him.)

Jem.—Stop that! This is no time for palaverin'. I must away wid the boys to the station. Hurroo! (exits R.—shouts off stage L. as Letheby enters L. and goes to window C.)

Letheby.—Mrs. D'Arcy, what's all this uproar about?

Mrs. D.—It's only Jem and the boys seein' the bailiffs off to Dublin. Hurroo! (runs out R.)

Letheby.—More trouble and on my account! Bankrupt! Bankrupt! Ah, who could have foreseen this ending of it all? What a name I shall leave after me—Letheby—a word of warning against shame and defeat (sits disconsolate at table C.) And I was growing so fond of my work—of my little home—of my books—the sodalities—and the little children (pauses awhile,

then rises with sudden determination.) Oh, but this weakness is unmanly, unpriestly. Yes, now, with renewed confidence in God, I'll face the front again, conquer disaster and bury all my misfortunes in work, work, work. (goes to bookcase.)

(Enter Alice, Mary and Nance, R.—Alice sits R.)

All.—Good morning, Father.

Letheby.—Good morning, friends.

Alice.—Father, Nance would speak with you.

Letheby.—What is it Nance?

Nance (advancing) Father, you have helped me in my trouble and I want to help you in yours. Please take this (offers money.) It's a little money sent me by my brother in America to pay my passage to go there and live with him—L.

Letheby (gently) No, Nance; a thousand times I thank you, but no, no no.

Nance.—Oh, do take it, poor man. I don't need it. I am strong and can work my passage over; or if need be, my brother will wait till I earn the money over again.

Letheby.—My good woman, again I thank you, but keep your money, go to your brother in America on the next ship, and in your new home in that land of promise, may every blessing of God attend you.

Alice.—But, father, isn't there some way Nance and I can help you?

Letheby.—Are you not helping me every day by your prayers and above all by your noble example? You, Nance, by your living down scorn and uncharitableness, have taught me how to face the hard world. And you, Alice, by your example of patience and endurance under suffering, oh, what an ineffable source of strength you have been to me! Where I, a priest, have wavered under the cross, you a child, have stood firm.

Alice.—But, oh, father, where would I be today, if you had not shown me the Crucified behind the Cross?

(Noise of carriage off stage.)

Mrs. D.—Here comes our poor Beatta home at last.

Letheby.—Now comes the hardest trial of all, to face the poor innocent whose father I sent to his untimely death.

(Enter Beatta in mourning costume.)

Omnes.—Welcome home, Beatta.

Beatta.—Thanks, friends, (crosses to table C.) Oh, father, how I have suffered.

Letheby.—And I have been the unwitting cause of it all.

Beatta.—No father; God would have it so. But, oh, my poor father's soul, what of his soul?

Letheby.—It rests, I think, with its Maker.

Beatta.—Oh, if I could be sure of that.

Letheby.—You may depend upon it with all faith. For even as the "Star of the Sea" went down and your father and his crew were perishing in the angry waters, I myself pronounced over them a general absolution of their sins; and the sole surviver of the disaster has since informed me that your father, as he was sinking for the last time opened his lips in prayer and held clasped in his hand a rosary.

Beatta.—My rosary!

Letheby.—Yes; and with that rosary he knocked upon the gates of heaven, and they were opened unto him.

Beatta.—Praise be to God. (rises) Now I am indeed happy, and I will weep no more. How happy my husband will be when he hears this. He's down the road now, father, with Fr. Dan, talking business with some merchants.

Letheby (aside) My creditors!

Beatta (shaking hands with Nance.) Nance, how well you look. (Note: In this act, Nance is neatly dressed, showing a marked improvement in appearance.) And Alice, how are you feeling these days?

Alice.—My general health is much improved, Beatta; but my eyes remain the same.

Beatta.—Poor soul! But where there is faith there is hope. And so I have brought this from abroad. (produces a gold crucifix, rather large.)

Alice.—What is it, Beatta?

Beatta.—A crucifix from the shrine of the Blessed Virgin at Lourdes. It has been dipped in the holy waters and blessed by the Bishop of Lourdes himself.

Letheby.—I have known these crucifixes to work miraculous cures among the faithful.

Beatta.—Who knows, Alice, with your faith, what this may do for you? (giving her crucifix.)

Alice.—Thank you, Beatta, I'll keep it about me always and pray with it often.

(Enter Orsmby and Fr. Dan.—R.)

Ormsby (crossing and taking hand of Letheby.) Father!

Letheby.—Welcome home, my friend.

Fr. Dan.—Friend is the word, Fr. Letheby. What do you suppose he has just done for you?

Letheby.—I'm sure I can't imagine.

Ormsby.—Only a mere trifle, Father.

Fr. Dan.—What? Only a mere trifle to pay all another man's debts? Well then, hereafter command Daddy Dan to all *triflers.*

Letheby.—You have paid all my debts, sir?

Fr. Dan.—That he has, father—not ten minutes ago—with his own check to your merchants creditors.

Letheby (taking Ormsby's hand.) Sir, I am eternally obliged to you. How shall I ever repay my indebtedness to you?

Ormsby (crossing to Beatta and taking her arm.) The indebtednes is all on my side, Sir. You are my creditor for a priceless happiness of soul.

(Darken stage and throw spot on Alice and the crucifix.)

Alice (holding crucifix before her and staring at it.) What a beautiful crucifix this is!

Beatta (crossing to her.) What's that you say, Alice?

Alice.—Is not the cross of gold and the body of silver?

Beatta.—Yes, yes, do you really see that or only imagine it?

Letheby (advancing to C.) What's this I hear?

Alice.—Wait!—rising—

Note: (Shift spot to picture of Madonna and Child.)

Alice (walking slowly towards picture, holding crucifix before her.) Is not that a picture on the wall there?

Letheby.—Yes, yes; can you make out what it represents?

Alice (staring at it and brokenly.) It's oh, it's—it's—the Madonna and the Child. (kneels before picture, while all look on amazed.) Oh, Blessed Virgin Mother, I knew you would not desert me. (rises and turns towards characters, pointing the crucifix in the direction of each as she names them.) (Note:—she does not mention Letheby, because up to now she has never

seen his face.) Oh, Daddy Dan, I recognize you—Beatta—Nance—Mary—Mrs. D'Arcy—I recognize everybody—I see!—thank God! I see!

(Kneels holding out crucifix.)

Letheby (As all bow their heads, except Alice.) Praise be to God from whom all blessings flow —

Picture—Curtain.

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